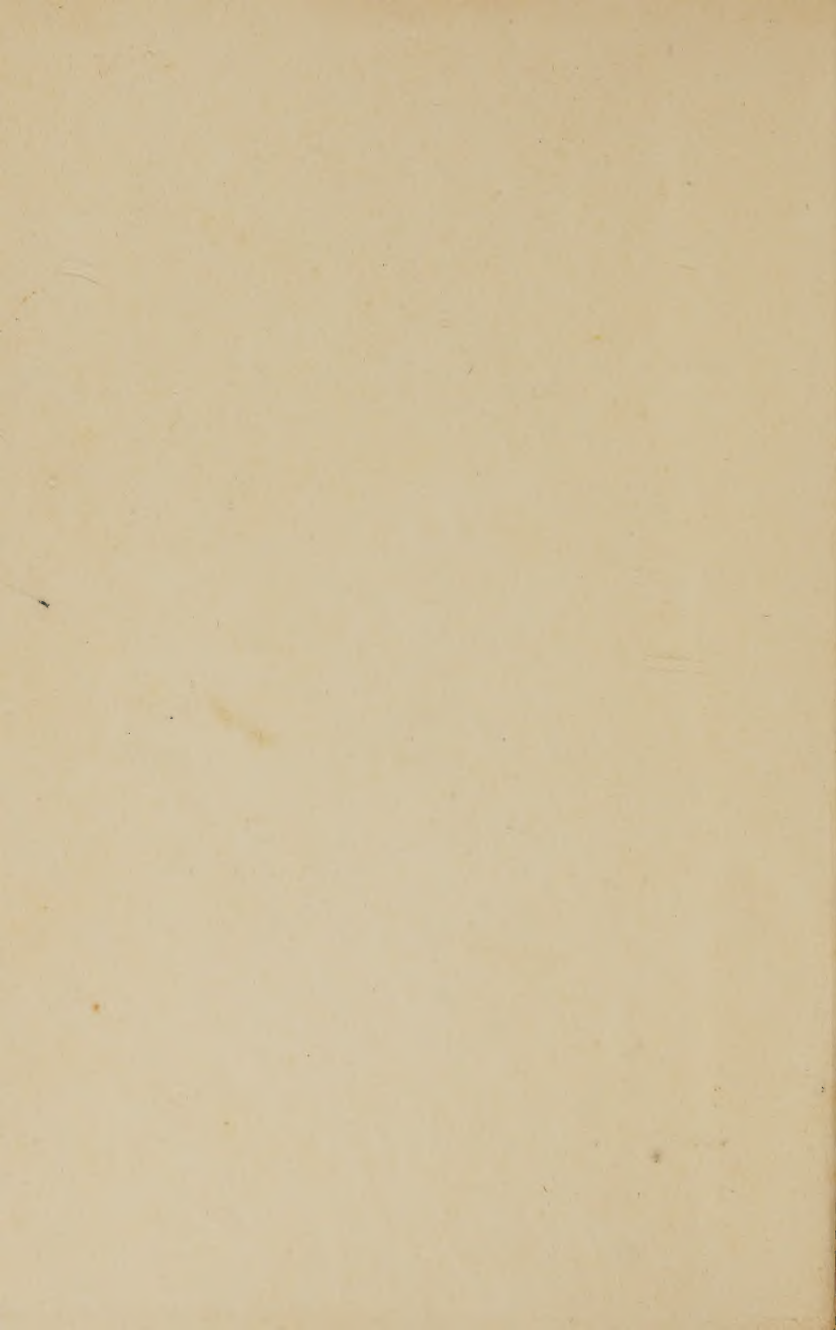


GLORIA



BY MRS. SOUTHWORTH



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GLORIA

A Novel

By MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH

Author of

"The Unloved Wife," "Lilith," "Em," "Em's Husband,"
"For Whose Sake," "Why Did He Wed Her?"
"The Bride's Ordeal," "Her Love or Her Life," Etc.



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"GLORIA"

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GLORIA

CHAPTER I

A SPOILED BEAUTY

Her eyes flashed fire! Convulsive rage possessed
Her trembling limbs and heaved her laboring
breast;

Blind to the future, by this rage misled,
She pulled down ruin on her reckless head.

DRYDEN.

“DAVID LINDSAY, will you marry me?”

The speaker was a girl scarcely past childhood, young, beautiful, good, wealthy, and yet—desperate, as not only her words, but her every look, tone, and gesture proved.

Her voice was low, her tone steadied by a powerful self-control. She stood there with a pale horror, yet fixed resolution, on her face; as one might stand on the deck of a burning ship, wrought up to choose death between fire and water, ready to escape the flames by plunging into the sea.

He to whom she spoke was a poor fisherman on the estate, young, strong, healthy and handsome, with the good looks that youth and health give, but bronzed by exposure, roughened by toil and rudely clothed.

The scene of this strange interview was a small, sandy island on the coast of Maryland. The time, an over-clouded and blustering morning near the end of January.

He had been hard at work mending his boat, which lay bottom upwards on the beach, when she came suddenly upon him.

Then he stood up, took off his old tarpaulin hat, and respectfully waited her orders.

What a contrast they formed, as they stood there facing each other—she, the delicate, patrician beauty, wrapped in richest furs and finest velvets, yet with that look of pale horror and fixed resolution on her beautiful face—he, the hardy son of the soil, bronzed and rugged, clothed in a rough pea-jacket and loose corduroy trousers, with their legs tucked into high, coarse, bull-hide boots; robust, erect, cordial, yet with a look of unbounded astonishment in his fine dark eyes.

They might have been the last young man and maiden left in the world, for all sign of human life or habitation near them, as they stood on that little sterile isle—around them the dark-gray sea roughened by a high wind—behind them the mainland in its wintry aspect of skeleton forests, rising from snow-clad hills.

“David Lindsay, will you marry me?” repeated the girl, seeing that he had not answered her question, but stood before her dumfounded with amazement.

“Miss de la Vera!” was all that he could utter, even now.

“I know that you love me,” she continued, speaking now with more vehemence, and looking over her shoulder, from moment to moment, as if, even

in that remote, sea-girt isle, she dreaded espionage, eavesdroppers, discovery, pursuit, arrest. "I know that you love me, David! It is that which gives me courage to come to you for refuge in my dreadful desperation. I know that you love me, for I heard you say so once—when you saved my life that time at the imminent risk of your own."

"And, oh, is it possible that you can love me?" breathed the young man, in deep tones vibrating with his heart's profound emotions; for with his whole heart he had loved her, deeply, ardently, hopelessly—with his whole soul he had worshiped her, afar off, as some exalted and forever unattainable good. "Is it possible that you can love me?"

"No!" she answered, hurriedly. "I do not love you! That is, I mean I love everybody, and you more than others; but oh, David, feeling sure that you love me, for you told me so once——"

"I was mad in my presumptuous folly——" began the youth.

"Feeling sure that you love me, because you told me so once, although I do not love you yet more than others, I will be your wife and try to love you more, if only you will take me far away from this place at once and forever, David! If you ever cared for me, stop to ask no questions; but do as I ask you, and you shall have my hand and all that I possess!" she breathed hardly, looking over her shoulder at intervals, with a nervous, expectant, terrified manner.

"Miss de la Vera, it is you who are mad now!" he replied, in a tone of ineffable sadness and longing, as he gazed on her with something like consternation.

And well he might! The situation was astounding!

Here was this young girl, Gloria de la Vera, the daintiest beauty, the wealthiest heiress in the country, proposing to marry HIM, the poor young fisherman attached to the estate! It was wonderful, unprecedented, incredible!

Why, half the young men in the community were mad to get her. A smile of hers would have brought the best of them to her feet.

And yet she came to give her hand and her fortune to this poor, unlearned young fisherman!

"Nothing, nothing but temporary insanity could have betrayed her into such a reckless proposal," said the young fisherman to himself.

Yet the girl who stood there before him, calm, pale, and steadfast as a marble statue, was not insane—no, nor immodest, nor unmaidenly, however appearances might tell against her.

Neither had she done any wrong, or even suffered any wrong; for she had scarcely a fault in her nature to lead her into any evil, and never an enemy in the world to do her any injury.

Nor had she quarreled with a betrothed lover and sought to revenge herself upon him by rushing into this low marriage; but she had never been in love and never been engaged.

Neither did she hurry towards matrimony as a refuge from domestic despotism, for she was the petted darling of a widowed and childless uncle, who had been a father to her orphanage; and she had had her own right royal will and way all her little life.

If there were any despotic tyrant at old Promontory Hall, that tyrant was the dainty little beauty,

Gloria de la Vera herself, and if there were any "down-trodden" slave, that victim was the renowned military hero, Colonel Marcellus de Crespigny!

Why, then, since no reasonable, nor even unreasonable motive could be found for the mad act, should Gloria de la Vera wish to hurl herself headlong down into the deep perdition of a low and loveless marriage?

To elucidate the mystery we must narrate the incidents of her short life.

On the coast of Maryland there is a bleak head of land thrown out into the sea, and united to the main only by a long and narrow neck of rocks.

If this weird headland had been a little loftier it would have been a promontory—or if the neck of rocks had been a little lower it would have been an island.

As it happened, it was neither, or it was both; for, at low tide, when the neck was bare, the head was a promontory, and at high tide, when the waves rolled over the rocks, it was an island entirely surrounded by the sea.

The ground arose gradually from the shore to the centre, upon the highest and safest part of which stood a large, square, heavy, gray stone building, in a yard inclosed by a high stone wall.

Lower down on the shore was another wall, called the sea-wall.

Beyond this, on the sand, were a few scattered fishing huts and boat-sheds.

There was but little vegetation on the place, and the nearer the shore the sparser the growth. On the hill near the house, indeed, there were a few old oaks, said to have been planted more than two

centuries before by the first owners of the soil and builders of the house. There were also a few gigantic horse-chestnuts and other fine forest trees; but all these had been transplanted from the mainland ages before. There was nothing of native growth on the promontory.

Behind the house was an old garden, where "made soil" was so rich that the place had grown into a perfect thicket of shrubs, vines, creepers, bushes, and all sorts of hardy old plants, flowers, and fruit-trees.

Behind this was a kitchen garden, where a few vegetables were with difficulty raised for the use of the family, and beyond were fields of thinly growing grass and grain, that barely afforded sustenance for the cattle and sheep on the premises.

Altogether this half sterile promontory, with its square, massive gray stone mansion, its high stone yard-wall, its strong stone sea-wall, its iron gates, and its grim aspect, looked more like a fortress or a prison than the hereditary home of a private family.

The locality had also a bad reputation, and a worse tradition, besides as many aliases as any professional burglar.

It was called Pirates' Point, Buccaneers' Bridge, and La Compte's Landing.

The story, or the history, was that this place had been the frequent resort of the notorious freebooter, La Compte, whose *nom-de-guerre* of "Blackbeard" had been, in the old colonial days, the terror of the Chesapeake and its tributaries.

Vast treasure, it was said, had once been buried

here, and might still be waiting its resurrection at the hands of some fortunate finder.

However that might have been, whatever wealth of gold, silver, or precious stones might have lain hidden for ages in the depths of that sterile ground, it is certain that the last proprietor of the promontory was poor enough.

He was Marcellus de Crespigny, a retired officer of the army, an impoverished gentleman.

At the time our story opens, Colonel Crespigny was a young widower, without children and without family, if we except his maiden aunt, Miss Agrippina de Crespigny, and his youthful ward, Gloria de la Vera.

His history may be very briefly summed up. He was the second son of a wealthy Louisiana planter, whose estate being entailed upon the eldest male child, left little or nothing to younger brothers or sisters.

Marcellus, when required to select a profession, being of a grave and studious disposition, would have preferred divinity or medicine, but finally yielded to the wish of his father, and entered West Point Military Academy to be educated for the army.

At the age of twenty-one he graduated with honors, and then went to spend a short leave with his parents previous to joining his regiment.

He met them by appointment at Saratoga, which was at that time the headquarters and great summer resort of Southern families, flying from the fierce heat and fatal fevers of their native districts to the cool breezes and healing waters of the North.

And here, Marcellus, or, as he was most frequently called, Marcel de Crespigny, met the great

misfortune of his life, for here he first saw the lady who was destined to be his wife.

Marcel de Crespigny was one of the handsomest men of his time. At the age of twenty-one he was as beautiful as Apollo. His form was of medium size and fair proportions, his head stately and well set, his features Romanesque in their regularity and delicacy of outline; his hair and beard were dark brown, and closely curled; his eyes dark hazel, with a steady, thoughtful, sympathetic gaze that had the effect of mesmerizing any one upon whom it fell.

Such beauty is too often an evil and a cause of weakness in man. It frequently inspires and nourishes vanity, and saps and blights true manliness.

Such, however, was not its effect upon Marcel de Crespigny.

He had his fatal weakness, as you will presently discover; but that weakness did not take its root in self-love—quite the contrary.

If he had possessed vanity, however, he would have found a surfeit of food for it.

Wherever he appeared, he was noticed as the handsomest man in the company, and many were the light-headed and soft-hearted girls who fell more or less in love with him.

At Saratoga, in the immediate circle of his mother and sisters, he met a party of West Indians—the Count Antonia de la Vera, an aged Portuguese grandee, his young wife, the Countess Eleanor, her sister, Eusebie La Compte, and their three-year-old daughter, named after the good Queen of Portugal, Maria da Gloria; but for the radiant beauty of her fair complexion, golden hair,

and sapphire eyes, which she inherited from her mother, they called her Gloria only.

Of all the people present, this child took suddenly and solely to the young lieutenant. She would leave father, mother, auntie or nurse, to leap into the arms of her "Own Marcel," as she soon learned to call him. It was wonderful; and superficial people said it was his gay uniform that attracted the child—but then the child looked only at his eyes!

But there was another of the West Indian party who found great pleasure in the presence of Marcel de Crespigny. This was Miss Eusebie La Compte, the sister of the Señora Eleanor.

They, the sisters, were not West Indians, but Marylanders, orphan daughters and co-heiresses of old George La Compte, of La Compte's Landing and Pirates' Promontory.

In the division of the estate after the death of their parents, the most valuable portion, La Compte's Landing, had been given to the eldest daughter, Eleanor, and the least desirable, Promontory Hall, to the youngest, Eusebie.

It was while the sisters were residing at the house of their guardian, an eminent lawyer of Washington city, that they made the acquaintance of the Count de la Vera, then ambassador from Portugal. He was a bachelor, and attracted by the radiant blonde beauty of the elder sister, he had proposed for her hand.

Eleanor, whose heart was free, and whose fancy was fascinated by the prospect of rank, wealth and position, promptly accepted the offer, and in due time became Madame de la Vera.

A brilliant season in Washington followed their marriage, then a tour of the fashionable watering-places.

Finally, when the ambassador was recalled, he went to Lisbon to resign his portfolio, and then he came back and settled down on his West Indian estates.

But not for long.

Troubles broke out. Possessions were insecure.

Count de la Vera sold off his property and came to Maryland, the native State of his beautiful wife, where he invested largely in land.

By this time the Señora Eleanor's health began to fail. Then her doting husband sent for her sister to travel with her, and to help to relieve her of the care of their infant daughter, Gloria.

They all went to Saratoga together, and thus it happened that we found them in the company of Madame de Crespigny and her daughters.

Eusebie La Compte, the heiress of the bleak promontory, had not the radiant beauty of her sister, whose brilliant complexion, shining golden hair and sparkling blue eyes had been inherited by her daughter; no, the pale face, sandy locks and gray eyes of Eusebie formed but a tame copy of the brighter picture.

Yet Eusebie could not be called "plain," and far less "ugly." Her form seemed cast in the same mold as that of her beautiful elder sister, only it was thinner. Her profile had the same classic facial angle, but it was sharper. Her complexion was quite as fair, only it was paler. Her hair was of the same color, only it was duller. Her eyes were of the same hue, but they were dimmer.

If Eusebie had been healthy and happy, she would have been as beautiful and brilliant as her sister; or if she had been smitten, as Eleanor had, by hectic fever only, which gives color to the cheeks and light to the eye. But to be afflicted with malaria, which dulls the complexion and dims the eyes, is quite another thing.

Nevertheless, there were times when Eusebie was almost beautiful. It was when any strong emotion flushed her cheeks and fired her eyes.

The West Indian party did not go much into society. The health of Señora Eleanor forbade their doing so. The only company they saw was our party from Louisiana.

The illness of the mother and the negligence of the nurse, threw the little Gloria very much upon the care of Eusebie, who was almost always to be found in Madame de Crespigny's circle.

Thus it happened that Eusebie and Marcel were brought daily together, and united by their common interest in the beautiful child, Gloria.

So Eusebie, the pale, agueish girl, fell in love with the handsome young Marcel—fell in love with him, not after the manner of the soft-hearted girl, who sighed in secret and slipped out of sight, but after the manner of the woman who says to herself, "Love or death," and thinks towards her victim, "Your love or your life!"

Marcel de Crespigny being of a tender, affectionate, sympathetic nature, had been more or less in love all the days of his youth. In earliest infancy he was ardently in love with his nurse. At five years old he was passionately enamored of his nursery governess, a bright young Yankee girl.

And when she married the Methodist minister, Marcel wept tears of agony. His Sunday-school teacher, an amiable old maid, was his next flame. When she died of yellow fever he put crape on his little cap and flowers on her grave.

Then followed, as queens of his soul—his sisters' music mistress, his mother's seamstress, and the overseer's sister-in-law. At the age of fifteen he actually offered marriage to the doctor's widow, a genial, soft-eyed, warm-hearted matron of thirty-five, who, in her wisdom and goodness, refrained from wounding his affection by contempt, but gravely and kindly assured him that, though she declined to be engaged then, yet she would wait for him, and if he should be in the same mind five years from that time, she would listen to him.

The boy left her, in ecstasies of hope and happiness, after vows of unchanging, eternal fidelity.

But he did not remain in the same mind, which was fortunate, as the doctor's widow also died, and—of yellow fever.

At the age of seventeen, when the young man entered West Point, as we have said, he would have speedily contracted a pure, platonic love for the colonel's wife, a handsome and intellectual lady of middle age, only a high sense of honor warned him of the danger of such moral quicksands.

After this the boy devoted himself to his military studies, and the sentiment of spoonyism soon gave place to the sentiment of heroism.

Yes, Marcel de Crespigny had been in love nearly all his life; but he was neither vain enough nor observant enough to perceive the preference bestowed on him by his young lady friends; nor would he ever have known the infatuation of Eusebie La

Compte, had not his mother discovered and revealed it to him.

In the eyes of Madame de Crespigny, the pale Eusebie seemed a very eligible match for her portionless son. Report had exaggerated the riches of the co-heiresses. The elder sister had married a Portuguese grandee. Altogether the connection seemed a good one in a social and financial point of view.

Of course, Madame de Crespigny did not set the matter before her son in that light. She knew Marcel too well. She adroitly directed his attention to the delicate girl, and enlisted his sympathies for her, so that he soon perceived how the pale cheeks would flush, and the dim eyes fire, and the whole plain face grow radiant and beautiful in the love-light of his presence. His heart was free, and so he became interested in her. He thought she was the first who had ever loved him, and so he grew to believe that he loved her.

At least he proposed to her and was accepted.

As the young officer had but a month's leave before joining his regiment, that was under orders to march for Mexico to join General Scott's army on the first of September, and as the bride-elect decided to accompany her intended husband, "even to the battlefield," the engagement was a short one. The wedding was hurried.

On the morning of the twenty-fifth of August the young couple were quietly married in the nearest church, and immediately after the ceremony they set out for Washington, where Lieutenant de Crespigny joined his regiment, which was on the eve of departure for the seat of war.

I do not mean here to tell over again, even the

least part, the oft-repeated story of the Mexican War, but only to allude in the briefest manner to Marcel de Crespigny's share in it. He went to Mexico, accompanied by his bride, who was with him wherever duty called.

She spent the first three years of her married life in camps, on battle-fields, and in hospitals, and so did her woman's share of the work.

He behaved gallantly from first to last, as is best shown by his military record. For, having entered the service at the beginning of the war with the rank of second lieutenant of cavalry, he left it at the close with that of colonel and brevet brigadier-general.

At the earliest solicitation of his wife, he then resigned his commission and retired with her to private life, on her estate at Pirates' Promontory, the principal wealth of which consisted in its great fisheries.

No children had come to them to crown their union, and this want had been a source of disappointment to the husband and humiliation to the wife, that even threatened in the course of time to estrange them from each other.

They must have continued to live a very lonely life on their remote estate—"the world forgetting, by the world forgot"—but for circumstances that occurred in the first year of their residence at the Promontory.

These were the deaths of the aged Count de la Vera and his fragile young wife, who passed away within a few days of each other, leaving their orphan child, Maria de Gloria, to the care of her maternal aunt and uncle, who gladly received her.

CHAPTER II

MARIA GLORIA DE LA VERA

A willful elf, an uncle's child,
And half a pet and half a pest,
By turns angelic, wicked, wild,
Made chaos of the household nest.

ANON.

GLORIA was seven years old when she came to live with her uncle and aunt. She was too young and too bright to realize the loss she had sustained in the death of her parents, or to grieve long after them. And besides—was it a new affection, or was it a reminiscence of the old one? She soon became devotedly attached to her uncle.

It was a grim home to which the radiant child had been brought; but nothing could dim the brightness of her spirit or depress the gladness of her heart—not old Promontory Hall with its gray, massive, prison-like structure, its high stone walls, and its dreary sea view, drearier than usual in the dull December days in which Gloria looked upon it—not even the deadening coldness that was creeping like a blighting frost between the husband and the wife—a coldness that the warm-hearted child felt rather than understood.

This condition, it must be confessed, was the fault of Eusebie rather than Marcel. It grew out of the jealousy and suspicion that had their root in her inordinate and exacting affection for him.

Her self-tormenting spirit whispered that he had never really loved her, but had married her out of

compassion, or, worse still, that he had never even cared for her in any manner, but had taken her for her little fortune alone. She saw that, as the years passed away, and hope of a family died out, he was disappointed in the continued absence of children, and she persuaded herself that he secretly hated and despised her for not giving them to him.

All this wore out her health and spirits.

And so she grew more and more irritable and petulant, often repelling his best-meant efforts to comfort and cheer her—telling him she wanted none of his capricious sympathy, his hypocritical tenderness; she could live without either.

All this he bore with the greater patience because he knew it could not last long—because he saw the fiery soul was burning out the fragile body, and because he felt that there was a grain of truth in the stack of falsehood. It was this—that he had married her for pity, or for such love as pity inspires.

The coming of Gloria into this house of discord had been as the advent of an angel in purgatory. Her very presence had a mediating, reconciling power.

Yet it must not be supposed that Gloria was a real angel, or that her coming brought perfect peace to the household. Far from this. Gloria had a fiery little spirit of her own that sometimes flamed out at very inconvenient times and seasons, and the most she did towards restoring harmony was to restrain by her bright presence the expression of harsh feelings, and to prevent the estrangement breaking out into open warfare.

While they would be sitting silent and sullen, at the same fireside, in the long back parlor that

looked out upon the leaden sky and sea of these dull December days, he would be apparently absorbed in the perusal of some favorite old classic author, she would be engaged in knitting, the glittering, fine, long needles glancing in and out between her delicate white fingers, in round after round of stitches—for she was a great knitter of lamb's-wool hose—the child would be sitting on the carpet somewhere near, earnestly employed in dressing her doll, drawing on her slate, or cutting figures out of paper—but always singing some little song to herself, filling the room with harmony.

How could the sullen couple break into open warfare in her presence?

Yet sometimes they did so. A dispute would arise out of that dull silence, as a breeze would spring over the gray sea, and blow into storm in one case as in the other.

The gust always arose from Eusebie's quarter. And Marcel always got the worst of it.

Often little Gloria would see him grieved, humiliated, yet silent and patient, under his wife's false accusations and bitter reproaches.

Then her soul would be filled with sympathy, her song would cease, her playthings drop, and she would get up and take her little stool and go and sit down by his side and slip her small hand into his and lay her bright head on his knee.

This always quelled the rising storm. It prevented Marcel from retorting, however much exasperated he might be, and it eventually silenced Eusebie, for no one can keep up a quarrel alone.

Gloria's interference did not always stop at sympathy for Marcel. It sometimes, indeed, broke out into righteous indignation against Eusebie.

On one occasion, she had heard her unhappy aunt taunt him with his want of fortune and charge him with mercenary motives in marrying her. She had seen her uncle's dark cheek flame, and had noticed how hard it was for him to keep his temper; and she had left her play and gone and sat down by his side, and put her little arms around his knee and laid her shining head upon it.

That had soothed and silenced him. He could not give way to his evil spirit in the presence of the child.

But, mind, when at length he arose and left the parlor, and Gloria found herself alone with her aunt, she rebuked that passionate woman fearlessly.

"You treat my uncle worse than you would dare to treat any negro slave on the promontory," she exclaimed, in angry tears.

"He is not your uncle," was all the lady said in reply.

"He is your husband, then! And you treat him worse than you would dare to treat any one else in the world, just because he is a gentleman and cannot retort upon you. You just dare to talk to old 'Phia as you talk to him, and she would give you such a tongue-lashing as you would not get over in a month."

"If you do not cease your impertinence at once, Miss, I will give you such a whip-lashing as you won't get over in six!" exclaimed the angry woman.

"No you will not, auntie! If you were to lay a whip upon me, only once, you would repent it all your life, and you would never have a chance to do it again. You are my auntie; but my uncle is my guardian, and he would lead me out of this

house and we would never return to it. You know that!"

"Oh, Heaven! It is too true, for he loves me not at all!" breathed the poor woman, losing all self-command, and utterly breaking down in humiliation.

In a moment the child was at her side—at her feet.

"Oh, auntie, poor auntie, don't cry! I have been naughty, very naughty! And I am sorry, very sorry! Indeed you may strike me now, if you want to, for I do deserve it now!" she said, trying with all her heart to soothe the weeping woman.

But Eusebie clasped the child to her bosom and burst into a passion of sobs and tears.

"I love you, auntie, dear. I do love you, and I am so sorry I was so naughty," said the child, clasping the unhappy creature around the neck and lavishing caresses on her.

But Eusebie only sobbed the harder for all this.

"And uncle loves you, auntie, dear, indeed he does, although you do always tell him that he doesn't care for you. I know he does, for when you are"—the child was about to say "cross," but checked herself in time, and continued—"when you are unhappy he looks at you so pitifully."

"Oh, Gloria, you don't know anything about it, and I don't want his pity. I am not a dog or a beggar," exclaimed Eusebie, bitterly, as she put her niece from her lap and hurried from the parlor to her own room, to give unrestrained way to her grief.

This heart-sick and brain-sick poor woman was the plague and curse of the household, and such scenes as these were of frequent occurrence.

Little Gloria acted always as a peacemaker, and always successfully; only once in a long time did her sense of justice rouse her indignation to the height of upbraiding her "auntie," and then her quick bursts of temper were followed by as quick repentance and reparation. She was very impulsive—

"A being of sudden smiles and tears."

This swift impulsiveness, with its sudden action and reaction, was the keynote to her whole character, the "kismet" of her life.

As yet she was the peacemaker of the house, and all within it felt that this had been her mission to the household. Even the old family servants put their heads together confidentially, or shook them wisely, while they whispered:

"Whatever de trouble is atween de two, marster and mist'ess done been parted long a merry ago if it hadn't been for little Glo'."

Indeed, this Promontory Hall, with its high, enclosing walls, and the gray sea rolling around it, and the estranged, unhappy pair within it, must have been a very dull, dreary and depressing home for any child who had not, like Gloria, an ever springing fountain of gladness in her own soul.

As soon as the long winter was over, and the sun shone warm and bright, and the earth grew green and the sea blue, Gloria was out and abroad, with the earliest birds and flowers, as bright as the brightest, and as glad as the gladdest.

With the revival of all nature there was a great revival of business also in the fisheries appertaining to the Promontory and its neighboring isles.

The place that was so solitary all the winter was now all alive with fishermen, whose huts and tents and sheds dotted all the little islands within sight from the promontory. No fishermen except those in the service of the family were allowed to haul the seines, or even cast a net from the home beach.

Among the fishermen attached to the service of the family was a young lad of about twelve years old. His parents had passed away, leaving him in the care of his grandmother, who lived in a tiny, sandy islet that stood alone, half a mile east of the promontory.

Who had been the original owner of the little sandhill no one ever knew; for the property was not of sufficient value to stimulate inquiries; and, besides, it had been for ages past occupied by a family of squatters, the present representatives of whom were David Lindsay and his grandmother.

It was on a brilliant May morning that the little Gloria, in her wanderings about the promontory, came to a broken part of the old sea-wall, and, instigated by curiosity, clambered over the stones and looked out upon a long stretch of sands upon which sheds, huts, and stranded boats were scattered among nets, seines, sea-weed and driftwood.

The child, standing in the breach of the wall, paused to gaze with interest on the rude scene that was so entirely new to her.

Then she saw a boy seated amid a drift of nets and seines, with a reel of coarse twine and a large wooden needle in his hand, busy with some work that quite absorbed his attention; for he neither saw nor heard the approach of the little girl.

She, on her part, stood still and watched him with surprise and delight.

The solitary child had not seen another child of any sort, white or black, girl or boy, for more than a year. She had lived only with grown-up people, and very "scroobious" and depressing grown-up people at that. Now her heart leaped for joy at the sight of an angel from her own heaven—another child!

What if he was a poor little lad, with a torn straw hat set on his tangled black curls, a sunburned face, a patched coat, trowsers rolled up to his knees, and below them naked legs and feet? He was another child—an angel from her own heaven! He had come with the sun and the spring, with the birds and the flowers. Here was the crowning joy of the season indeed.

He would be her playmate. He would not rail and weep like Eusebie, nor sigh and groan like Marcel. He would be glad like herself.

Without an instant's hesitation she ran down to him.

Children, when left to their own intuition, are the most simple and natural democrats and republicans. They care nothing and know nothing of caste. When misled by others, they may become the most repulsive little aristocrats alive.

She stood before him breathless, smiling.

As for the boy, he looked up at her in pleased surprise at the brightest vision that had ever gladdened his eyes.

"Little boy!" she exclaimed, in a tone of kindly greeting.

"Yes, little girl," he answered, as he arose, dropping his nets and taking off his torn hat.

"I'm so glad to see you!" she exclaimed, smiling.

"So am I, you. Will you sit down on the boat?"

It is quite dry," he said, as he pointed to the up-turned skiff upon which he himself had been seated.

"Oh, yes, I thank you. I would like to sit down because I have been walking all over the promontory and I am so tired," she said, as she seated herself.

"Put your feet on this stone, the sands are damp," said the lad, as he placed a flat piece of rock near her.

"Yes; I thank you. And you sit down, too. Don't you stand," she continued. He obeyed the little lady, and seated himself beside her.

"Oh, I am so glad I found you!" she exclaimed, with dancing eyes.

"So am I you; very glad," he answered, quietly.

"Have you got anybody to play with?" was her next question.

"No," he replied.

"No more have I. What is your name, little boy?"

"Dave."

"Dave? That means David, doesn't it?"

"Yes, David; but everybody calls me Dave."

"Well, what else is your name besides David?"

"Lindsay—David Lindsay."

"Oh! Uncle reads to us about one—

"Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount,
Lord Lion, King at Arms."

Was he any kin to you?"

"No, there ain't no kings nor lions about here," replied the lad, laughing.

"I don't know. I didn't think there was any children or playmates about here; but after finding you I should not wonder if I found kings and lions and—and dwarfs and fairies."

"I never saw any about here," said the lad, decidedly.

"David Lindsay, don't you want to know what my name is?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, then, why don't you ask me?"

"Because—I don't know—I didn't like to."

"Well, my name is Maria da Gloria de la Vera!"

"Oh! what a long name!"

"Yes, but it is a beautiful name, with a beautiful meaning."

"What does it mean?"

"I believe, but I don't quite know, that it means the Glory of the Truth, or something like that."

"It is too long."

"Yes, it is long as it is spelt and written; but not as it is pronounced, for it is pronounced Davero—Gloria Davero—and the colored folks have got it down to little Glo'."

"Oh, I like that! Little Glo'!" said the lad, with animation.

"Do you? I am so glad! What does your name mean, David Lindsay?"

"I'm blest if I know what it means, if it means anything at all."

"But it must mean something, David Lindsay. All names do."

"Well, then, I will ask my grandmother."

"Yes, do. Do you like me, David Lindsay?"

"Oh! yes, indeed I do."

"So do I you, ever so much. What is that you are doing with that long wooden needle and big ball of cord, David Lindsay?"

"I am mending nets."

"Oh, how curious it is. Will you show me how to do it, David Lindsay? Is it hard to do?"

"No, it is easy. I will be glad to show you," said the boy, who then instructed her in the simple stitch by which the nets were made.

"What fun!" exclaimed the child, as her slender little fingers plied the wooden needle in and out among the meshes. "Who taught you to do this, David Lindsay?"

"I——" The boy hesitated and looked puzzled, and then said: "I don't know. I netted nets ever since I could remember, and before, too, I reckon, but not so large nets as these. I netted minnow nets first, I remember that. I s'pose father must ha' taught me."

"Have you got a father and mother, David Lindsay?"

"Yes, in Heaven," replied the lad, lifting his broken hat and bending his head.

"So have I—in Heaven. Have you got any brothers and sisters, David Lindsay?"

"No, not one."

"No more have I. Have you got any playmates?"

"No; never had any."

"No more have I. But now I have you, and you have me, and we will be playmates, won't we?"

"Yes, indeed!"

"How old are you, David Lindsay?"

"I am almost twelve; I shall be twelve next Fourth of July."

"Oh, what a splendid birthday! I shall be eight the first of June!"

"June is a nice month, too. The roses are all out," said the boy.

The little girl fell into thought for a few minutes, and then she said :

"What made you lift your hat and bend your head when you said 'Heaven,' David Lindsay?"

"Grandmother taught me."

"'Grandmother!' Yes, you said grandmother before."

"She is father's mother. Father was drowned in a squall while out fishing when I was seven years old. That was in the spring; mother died of pleurisy the next winter; a bitter, bitter winter, when the snow lay two or three feet deep on the ground and drifted around our little house, and there was no one to bring us wood from the main but grandmother and me, and we had to go for it in the boat and couldn't bring but a little at a time; and we had no doctor and that was the way poor mother died."

Gloria's bright eyes were full of tears. She slipped her hand in that of the boy and said :

"But maybe she would have died all the same. My mother had everything in the world, and she died. But you know neither of them really died; they went to heaven."

"Yes," said the boy, in a low tone.

"Now, ain't grown people queer, David Lindsay?"

"How?"

"The way they talk. They will say one minute a man has died and gone to heaven, and the next minute they will say he is buried in such a church-yard. Now, how can he be in heaven and in the ground at the same time?"

"I don't know. It is a great mystery," said the boy, gravely.

"I don't like mysteries. I don't. They always

make me feel as if I was in a cellar, or some dark place and in danger. And what is more, I don't believe in them. I don't believe my father and mother are buried in the ground. I believe they both went out to heaven before that which they used to live in was put in the ground. And, somehow, inside of myself I know it is so. Do you like to read, David Lindsay?" she asked, abruptly.

"Yes; I learned to read and write at St. Inigoes parish school; but I have no books except Webster's Spelling Book, and I know every word of that by heart, even the fables."

"Oh, then I can bring you ever so many books. I have a bookcase full, all of my own, in my room, and uncle has a great room full, from the floor up to the ceiling, all around the walls, you know."

"That is very good of you. I do thank you. You are the little girl that lives up in the house, then—Colonel de Crespigny's niece?"

"Yes—no. I mean I am Madame de Crespigny's niece; though, do you know, it seems so strange, I always feel as if he was more kin to me than she is!"

"I suppose you love him best; that must be the reason. Well, everybody loves Colonel de Crespigny. I know I do. He took me on to work here out of kindness, I am sure, for he couldn't really want me, you see, so many colored people as he has!"

"He is very, very good, and very unhappy. Where do you live, David Lindsay?" she inquired, with the sudden transition of a child's thoughts.

"Do you see that little, tiny bit of an island out there by itself?" he said, rising and pointing eastward.

"What!—that little sandbank?" she exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes, there is a house on it."

"A mere shed."

"We live in it, grandmother and I. And we have chickens and ducks, and a little bit of a garden, with a made soil, where we raise radishes and lettuce and cabbage and potatoes."

"No flowers?"

"Oh, yes; a red rose-bush, and a white rose-bush, and pinks, and pansies and larkspurs."

"Oh, that is pretty! Is your grandmother nice?"

"Oh! I tell you!" heartily answered the boy.

"Would she let me come to see her?"

"Why, of course she would, and glad!"

"Well, then, will you take me over there to see your grandmother, David Lindsay?"

"Yes, indeed, that I will, if your uncle will let you go."

"Oh, he'll let me. But how do you get over there, David Lindsay?" inquired the child, gazing over the expanse of water to the little dot that seemed to be about half-way between the promontory and the eastern horizon.

"Why, in my little row-boat, to be sure. There, there it is, tied to that post," answered the boy, pointing to a little skiff that was rocking on the water.

"Oh-h-h! And you'll take me in that? Oh-h-h! Won't that be splendid! When will you take me, David Lindsay?" she exclaimed, with all a child's eager delight in an anticipated holiday.

"To-morrow, if they will let you go. To-night when I go home, I will tell my grandmother, and

she will have something to please you when you come, you know."

"Will she? Oh, how nice. I am so glad I found you. Ain't you glad you found me, David Lindsay?"

"Oh, I tell you! Yes, indeed! I was so lonesome here."

"So was I! But we have found one another; we won't be lonesome any more, will we? We will have such good times, won't we now, David Lindsay?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the boy.

"But, oh, I say! See here! I can't net any more. This hard twine hurts my fingers dreadfully," said little Glo', looking at her bruised digits.

"I thought it would. Put it up. It is dinner-time, too."

"Yes, I suppose it is, and I must go home," said the child, rising reluctantly.

"Oh, no, please don't," eagerly exclaimed the boy. "Stay here and have some of my dinner."

"Dinner!" exclaimed little Glo', looking all around them in vain search of a kitchen.

"I have brought it with me in a basket," David explained, as he lifted a little ragged flag-basket from its hiding-place beside the boat. "Sit down and have some."

"Oh, yes, thank you, so I will! I like that!" she answered, promptly reseating herself.

He then opened his basket, and took from it, first, a coarse crash towel, which he handed to her, saying:

"Now please to set the table."

"Set the table?" she echoed, in perplexity.

"Yes, you know, spread that towel on the flat

stone by you, and I will hand you out the things to put on it."

"Oh! yes, I know—and play we are housekeeping!" she exclaimed, delightedly, as she laid the cloth.

Then he handed her, in succession, a little cracked, blue-edged white plate, a broken knife and fork, a little paper of salt, another of bread, six hard boiled eggs, and a dozen young radishes, all of which she arranged upon the "table" with funny little housewifely care.

"Now, this will have to be broiled," he continued, as he took from the bottom of the basket a smoked red herring on a cabbage leaf and laid it on the boat.

"Broiled!" echoed the little housekeeper, as she looked all about in search of a fire.

"Yes," he answered, laughing, as he went and gathered up some dry, decayed driftwood, and broke it into small chips, and piled it up on some stones. Then he took a tinder box, flint and steel, from his pocket, struck a light, and kindled a fire.

"Oh! that is grand!" exclaimed the delighted child, as she watched him, for all this was play to her.

When the fire had burned down to coals he laid the herring on it.

A fine appetizing flavor soon arose.

Little Glo' watched the boy as he turned the herring until it was done, and then put it on the blue-edged white plate and set it on the table.

"Oh! isn't this just perfectly splendid!" again exclaimed the child, as the two sat down to the primitive meal.

They chatted faster than they ate—at least little Glo' did.

When it was over and the plates and knife and fork had been put back in the basket, the girl arose, very unwillingly, to depart.

"I must go now," she said; "they will all be looking for me. But, oh! I have had just such a grand time, and I am so glad we found each other! Ain't you, David Lindsay?"

"Yes, indeed!" exclaimed the boy.

She laughed, kissed her hand to him, and ran off home, singing as she went.

This was the first meeting between Gloria de la Vera and David Lindsay, the poor fisher-lad, whom, a few years later, in her utter desperation, she asked to marry her; but many strange events were to happen before she could be driven to such despair as to cast her beautiful and blameless self, with her rank and fortune, at the feet of this humble lad, "unlearned and poor," and lose herself in the deep dishonor of a low and loveless marriage.

CHAPTER III

THE GIRL'S MISSION TO THE BOY

She was his star.

BYRON.

GLORIA, singing as she went, and skipping like a kid from point to point, over the breach in the sea wall, and dancing through the old grass meadows and turnip fields—hurried on towards her home.

Suddenly her song ceased, and she stood still.

She saw her uncle walking alone with slow and melancholy steps, and his head bowed down upon his breast.

She would have spoken to him, but he waved his hand for her to go on to the house.

She looked at him wishfully, hesitatingly; but he only smiled sadly on her and repeated his gesture with more emphasis.

Then she obeyed him and reluctantly went on.

"That was like meeting a ghost," she said; and she sang no more that day.

She entered the house and met Sophia on her way through the hall with a pail of hot water in her hand and a look of indignation on her face.

"What's the matter, 'Phia? Has anything happened? I met uncle outside the park wall and he looked awful! awful!" said the child.

"Well he mought," replied the woman, wrathfully. "There's been the biggest row you ebber seed in yer life, and you not here to 'vent of it."

"Was it auntie and uncle?" inquired the child, in a tone of awe.

"Hi, who else? Yes, honey, it was master and mist'ess and de debbil! And you not here to carcumwent Satin!"

"Oh, dear me, I'm so sorry. How did it all happen, 'Phia?"

"Hi! How I know, chile? I wa'n't dere. It happen in de long sittin' room, in course, where dey most in gen'al sits. Fust fing we cullud people knowed was de bell rung wiolent, an' I run up an' foun' mist'ess in fits an' marster tryin' to fetch her to. We toted her up stairs 'tween us an' put her to bed. But soon's ebber she could speak she sent marster out o' de room. How does it allers happen,

honey? De debbil! Dere'll be murder done here some ob dese days—always the debbil, an' dis time he had it all his own 'fernal way, 'cause you wa'n't here to carcumwent him."

"Oh, I am so sorry. Poor uncle! poor auntie!" sighed the child, with a look of age and care coming over her bright young face.

"I'm mad; I ain't a bit sorry; I'm mad. If dem two fools was chillun, dey'd just get good hoopins for quarrelin' so; an' bein' grown-up 'dults, dey de-sarves hoopin' ten times as much as chillun, 'cause dey's big 'nuff to know better! I gwine up now to put her feet in hot water. I'd like to put him and her bofe in hot water up to deir necks, an' keep 'em dere till they promise to 'have deirselves better!" exclaimed 'Phia, as she took up the pail and went up stairs.

Gloria looked after her. She felt as if she ought to have rebuked the woman for her manner of speaking; but then she did not wish to raise another domestic storm, and she knew that 'Phia had a temper that blazed up at a word, as stubble flames up at a spark. Indeed, if the child had been required to write 'Phia's name, she would naturally have written it Fire, and thought that she was right.

She hung her hat and sack on the hall-rack, and then went softly up to her aunt's room to sit with her and be ready to run on any errand that was required.

She sat patiently with her auntie all the afternoon, reading a volume of Peter Parley's story-books.

In the evening she left her, quietly sleeping, and went down stairs to make tea for her uncle.

It was a rather silent meal. De Crespigney was

absorbed in thought, and never spoke to the child unless she asked him some question, and then he answered absently, though in the gentlest tone.

After tea she left him sitting in his old leathern arm-chair by the small wood-fire that the chill air rendered necessary even in June, and she went up to her own room and crept into bed.

The next morning Madame de Crespigny appeared at the breakfast-table as if nothing had happened. These stormy days are followed by calm mornings in the moral as well as in the physical atmosphere.

Gloria knew from experience that after such a tempestuous misunderstanding as they had had on the previous day, her uncle and aunt would have to be left alone to come to a reconciliation. She was also glad of such a good excuse to go out.

So, directly after breakfast, she went up to her bedroom, opened her glass-doored bookcase, and, after taking down and putting up volume after volume, she selected two which she thought would be most beneficial and acceptable to her new friend—these were the charming school-books: Peter Parley's First Book of Geography and Peter Parley's First Book of History, then just coming into use, both profusely illustrated with maps and pictures.

She put on her little rough-and-ready gray sack and her felt hat—for it was still chilly on the seaside in early June—took the two books under her arm and left the house.

Singing as she tripped along, she hurried blithely down to the breach in the wall, where she found the fisher boy busily engaged in smoothing that passage by laying the fallen stones a little leveller.

"Oh, good-morning, David Lindsay! Will you

take me over in your row-boat to see your grandmother this morning?" she asked as she came up.

"Oh, yes, indeed I will, and glad to do it!" replied the lad, lifting his torn hat from his black curls and holding out his hand to help her across the broken wall.

She sat down on the boat to recover her breath, while he said:

"I stayed here last night until ten o'clock, working to finish my nets, and so get time to take you over to-day. And then I came at daybreak this morning, and have been here ever since, so I have earned a holiday."

"Oh, how good of you to take so much trouble for me; but how could you see to do your work, after the sun went down?"

"The stars came out. It was one of the brightest starlight nights I ever saw! Besides, netting, you know, is such mere finger-work, that I could almost do it with my eyes shut. Are you ready to go?"

"Presently. Sit down here by me, I want to show you something."

The boy seated himself beside her.

"Here," she said, producing the First Book in Geography, and opening upon a page of engravings in sections representing the five races of man.

"Oh-h-h!" exclaimed the boy in delight, as he took the volume from her hands and gazed with devouring eyes upon the fascinating page.

He had never seen a picture of an Indian, an Ethiopian, a Mongolian, or a Malay in all his life, and now he gazed in a breathless rapture upon these.

Pictures were almost unknown to him—the pictures in his grandmother's old family Bible and the

half-a-dozen little illustrations above the fables in Webster's Spelling Book, being all that he had ever seen.

"Oh-h-h, you can't think how much I do thank you for lending me this splendid book!" he exclaimed, with fervent gratitude.

"Oh, indeed, I am ever so much obliged to you for being so pleased with it! It makes me feel so happy, you know! But turn over the next page. Oh, there are ever so many more nice pictures in it!"

"Are there?" he asked, and immediately turned the page to discover more and more treasures—Esquimaux and white bears of the Arctic circle; elk, moose, and reindeer, and red Indians of the northern lakes and forests; seals, beavers, Canadians, New England farms, churches, school-houses, New York seaports, shipping, and warehouses; Western prairies, forests and rivers; Southern bays, isles, and cotton plantations.

"Oh! oh! oh!"

What a treasury of happiness to the poor boy, hungering and thirsting for knowledge, who had scarcely ever seen three books or a dozen pictures in his life before, and who had scarcely any conception of any world beyond the horizon of his natural vision!

And as yet he had seen only a few index pictures of North America.

South America and all the Western Hemisphere was to follow in that delightful book.

"Oh, you never can know how much I thank you for this beautiful book!" he exclaimed, with enthusiasm.

"Why, don't I tell you I am ever so much obliged

to you for liking it so well!" said Gloria, her own blue eyes dancing with the delight of delighting.

Over and over he turned the bewitching pages, finding more and more pleasure as he went on even to the end of the book—the picture of the Cape of Good Hope, with Cape Colony.

He had taken some time to look through the volume, pausing long over each picture. So when he closed it, he arose and said:

"I could sit all day and night and look at this book, and forget to eat or sleep, I do believe; but I reckon it is time for us to go now."

"No, sit down again. I have got something else to show you," she answered.

He obediently reseated himself, and she put in his hand "The First Book of History," profusely illustrated with pictures of battles and conventions and portraits of military heroes and statesmen.

"Oh-h-h!" again exclaimed the boy, as he opened at a portrait of George Washington on one side, and the signing of the Declaration of Independence on the other.

He turned over page after page, finding fresh food for intellect and imagination in every one, while the little girl watched him with her blue eyes sparkling in sympathetic pleasure.

"Oh, how rich I shall feel, with these two books to read every night! I shall never go to bed at dusk when granny does because I am lonesome. I shall never be lonesome now," he said.

"I am so glad, and so very much obliged to you for being so happy over them, David Lindsay," she repeated, with more emphasis.

There is no knowing how long the two children might have lingered, sitting side by side on the old

boat—he poring with rapture over the book, she watching his enjoyment with ecstasy; but the hour of noon came and passed, and the healthy young appetite of the boy would not allow him to “forget to eat.”

“Oh, how late it is!” he exclaimed, reluctantly closing the book just at the picture of General Washington receiving the sword of Lord Cornwallis after the battle of Yorktown. “Come, we had better go now.”

“Well, yes, I suppose we had. You can read the books every night, can’t you, David Lindsay?”

“Yes, indeed. And when you are up at the house enjoying yourself with all your friends, you may think of me reading your books.”

“Oh! they are your books, David Lindsay,” she hastened to exclaim.

“I daren’t take them from you only as a loan; but, oh! I can never thank you enough for that. Come carefully over all this rubbish. Let me take your hand. There, now, step into the boat and sit down while I untie her. Don’t be afraid. She will not turn over.”

The child suffered him to put her into the rough little old shell that lay rocking on the sea.

He quickly unmoored the boat, got into it, seated himself, and rowed towards the little sand-hill that seemed a mere mote on the water.

David rowed vigorously, and the little skiff shot over the sea, and rapidly approached the island.

First she saw the sandy little hillock; next, that there was a tiny house on it, with trees on the farther side; then, as the boat reached the shore and grounded, she saw that the house was a small cottage with a gable roof and one chimney; with one

door and window on the ground floor, and one tiny, square window above in the gable. There were no shutters to the windows, but they were shaded from within by flowered wall-paper blinds. The little house was whitewashed with lime, and the door was painted with red ochre, a coarse coloring matter got from the soil on the main. A little garden around the house, with a "made soil," was fenced in with a whitewashed picket fence. Lilies, Canterbury-bells, hollyhocks, pinks, larkspurs, and other sweet, old-fashioned flowers grew in the front yard. A red rose-bush and a white rose-bush were trained, one on each side of the door. A white dog, of a nondescript race, was asleep on the step, and a black kitten was curled up snugly on his back. These proverbial "natural enemies" had never been anything but loving friends.

At the approach of David the dog sprang up, wide awake, overturning the kitten, who put up her back, gaped, and stretched herself, while Jack ran forward and leaped upon his master, who did not order him "down, sir!" but patted his head and returned caress for caress.

The red door opened then, and a smiling old woman appeared—Mrs. Lindsay, David's grandmother.

She was a small, plump, fair-faced, blue-eyed dame, with the white hair of sixty years parted plainly over her forehead, and banded back under a clean linen cap. She wore a striped blue and white cotton gown, of her own spinning and weaving, and a white handkerchief folded over her bosom, and a white apron tied before her gown.

She came forward, smiling pleasantly as she held out her hand to the child, while she spoke to David.

"Is this the little lady you have brought to visit me? I am very pleased to see thee, my dear."

"Oh, thank you, ma'am! It was so nice of you to let me come! And I like David Lindsay. He is all the playmate I have got. But he's splendid!" said the child, with enthusiasm.

The old woman smiled on her, patted the tiny hand she held in her own, and then led her into the house.

It was a good sized room, with clean, white-washed walls, the one window shaded with a home-made blind of flowered wall-paper; the floor of wide planks, perfectly bare, yet scrubbed to a creamy whiteness; in one corner a neat bed, with a patchwork quilt and snowy pillows; in another corner a loom, with a piece of cloth in process of weaving; in a third, a large spinning-wheel; in the fourth, a corner cupboard, with glass doors in the upper part, through which might be seen the clean, coarse, blue-edged crockery ware, and the bright pewter dishes of the little *ménage*.

In the middle of the floor stood a table covered with a coarse but snow-white cloth, and adorned with blue-edge cups and saucers and plates, while on the clean, red ochre-painted hearth stood a teapot and several covered plates and dishes, before the clear fire in the small open fire-place.

"Come, lass, let me take off 'ee coat," said the kind little woman, beginning to unbutton and untie until she had relieved the child of her hat and sack.

"Now, sit 'ee down, lass, while I put dinner on the table," she continued, depositing her small visitor on a low chip-bottomed chair, near the window-

sill, on which stood a box of mignonette, that filled the homely room with fragrance.

"'Ee's late, Dave. I thought 'ee'd be here wi' the lass an hour ago, and had all ready for 'ee," said the old woman, as she began to place dinner on the table.

"We were reading of a book what the little lady loaned me," replied the boy, as he carefully placed the two volumes on each side the Bible, which stood upon a chest of drawers at the end of the room, between the bed and the corner cupboard.

"It was my fault. I stopped David Lindsay to show him the books," put in the child.

"It wasn't 'ee fault, then. It was 'ee goodness, little lass. And it's na great matter. The dinner is no sich that it can be spoiled," said Dame Lindsay, as she placed the last dish on the table, and then led her small guest to a seat.

Poor as these cotters were in all things else, they were not poor in regard to food.

The sea supplied them with fish for immediate use, and for salting away against winter; the two pigs that they bought and raised at a trifling cost every year, provided them with pork and bacon; the small poultry-yard with fowls and eggs; the patch of garden with vegetables and fruit; the little Alderney cow with milk and butter.

The few other provisions they needed were easily procurable at the nearest country store on the main, in exchange for the excellent cotton hose and mittens knit by the industrious and skillful hands of the old dame.

Other trifling expenses of the little household were met by the money earned by David on the fishing landing of the promontory.

The dainty midday meat set before the little lady guest was not at all an every-day affair, but was got up expressly for her. It was very attractive—nice fragrant tea, with rich cream and white sugar; nice light, home-made bread, with sweet, fresh butter; fried bluefish, just out of the sea; poached eggs on toast; boiled spring chicken; mashed potatoes, green peas, lettuce, radishes, and, finally, cherry pie, strawberries and cream, and a plenty of new milk.

Little Glo' ate—well, like a healthy child, with an excellent appetite, and no one near to curb it.

"It is the nicest dinner I ever had in all the days of my life, and—I have been at big dinner parties, too, before I came to the promontory!" she declared, with equal frankness and emphasis, as she arose from the table.

At least, it was the most enjoyable.

The old dame smiled on her, and David felt so pleased and proud!

Ay! the Earl of Leicester entertaining Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle could not have felt more elevated in spirits by her majesty's august approbation than was the fisher-boy by the pleasure of his little lady guest.

"Mayhap 'ee'll come again to see us, little lady," said the old dame.

"Oh, indeed, indeed, indeed I will! Just as often as you'll please to let me come! Oh, it is so nice here! I'll be sure to come just as often as ever you will let me come!" exclaimed the child, heartily.

"That will be as often as 'ee likes," said the old dame.

Then, assisted by David, she hastily cleared away the table, taking the dishes into the "lean-to" be-

hind the cottage, there to remain until she could wash them up after the departure of the visitor.

Then she set herself to entertain the little lady.

She showed her all the few curiosities of the cottage—some strange South Sea shells that had been brought home by a sailor ancestor ages before, and which now decorated the low wooden chimney shelf; then the rusty old gun that had been carried by her own grandfather in the Revolutionary War; then some stuffed birds, some skeletons of strange fish, and some odd-looking pebbles from the beach.

Next she exhibited some of the small treasures of her chest of drawers—a curious patch-work quilt that had won the prize in a certain agricultural and industrial fair held at St. Inigoes many years before.

“And did you sew all these little pieces of colored calico and white cotton together with your own fingers?” inquired the child, with interest.

“Yes, dearie, I did.”

“Oh, how curious and how pretty! How I would like to do that! We have got ever and ever so many calico and cotton pieces in the scrap-bags at home! If I bring some over here, when I come again, will you show me how to cut the pieces into leaves, and flowers, and things, and sew them together like this?”

“Yes, little lass, I will teach ’ee with good will; for I do think it a merit to save up the scraps and turn them to good account, though they do tell me that now-a-days quilts are made by masonry, and sell cheaper than we could make ’em by hand. ’Ee sees, dearie, I use to make ’em to sell; but now I can’t get anybody to give me enough to pay for my work on ’em. So now I knit socks and mittens.”

"They make them by machinery, too," said the child.

"Yes, and I shouldn't wonder and they didn't come to hatch chickens by masonry some of these days! Well a-day! No masonry stockings can eekill my knitted stockings, and that the store-keeper knows, and allus takes 'em from me and pays me well in tea and sugar, and whatever I may want. As to the quilt-piecing, lass, I'll teach 'ee with good will. 'Ee's a plenty of leisure, I'll warrant, and 'ee's well spend it that way in saving the scraps and turning 'em to account as in another," concluded the canny old dame, as she folded her prize quilt, replaced it, and closed the drawer.

"Oh, I think it is such pretty and curious work, and it is so—economical!" said the little child-woman. "I shall be so glad to learn!"

"She likes to learn everything she sees going on," added David, who, with his hands in his pockets, stood a smiling spectator of the scene.

"That's right. Larn all 'ee can, little lass. Now come wi' me, and I'll show 'ee the young ducks that were hatched yesterday."

"Oh!" cried the child, jumping up in glee. "I never saw young ducks in all my life! What a nice place this is!"

"What! Don't they show 'ee the young things up by, at the house?" inquired the dame.

"No, ma'am; they never thought of it, I reckon; no more did I," answered the child, as she followed her conductress out into the poultry-yard.

She saw the young ducklings that were just out; then she saw the little chickens that were a week old, and seemed to know as much about life as she

herself did. Then she was taken through the garden, and she saw the strawberry bed and the one cherry tree, with its bright red fruit hiding in its green leaves, and the crooked apple tree that bore the green sweetings which would soon be ripe, and the currant bushes along the walk, with the small beds of peas and cabbage and corn between them, and then the bee hive and the two white pigs, and Winny, the little black and white cow, in her shed.

Then they went in.

"Oh! what a nice place this is! The nicest place I ever saw!" said the child.

"'Ee must come often to see it, if 'ee likes it so well," said the dame, who felt flattered by the child's sincere admiration; "'ee must come often, but now it is getting late i' the afternoon, and I must send 'ee home to 'ee friends, lest harm come to 'ee through this visit."

David, who had kept close to the pair all the day, now left them to get the boat ready.

The old dame carefully put on the child's hat and sack, and then threw a shawl over her own head, and led the little one down to the water's edge, where David stood in the boat, waiting.

The child threw her arms around the old woman's neck, and kissed her heartily, many times, thanking her warmly for the "happy, happy day" she had had.

The dame responded cordially.

David then handed the little girl into the boat, unmoored, and rowed rapidly for the promontory landing, which they reached in a few minutes.

The sun was just setting.

"Oh, David Lindsay, I have had such a splendid

time! Oh! I am so glad I found you!" exclaimed little Glo', as he helped her out of the boat.

"Oh, so am I! Ever so glad! And I think we ought to thank the Lord!" he added, solemnly.

"Oh! I will, when I say my prayers to-night. Are you going to study your books this evening, David Lindsay?"

"Yes, indeed. What are you going to do?"

"Oh, I—I think I will look out some more books for you, and then I will hunt out some pretty bright pieces of calico from the scrap-bag, to learn to make patch-work quilts, and have them ready against the next time I go to see your grandmother."

"When will you come again? To-morrow?" anxiously inquired the boy, as he leaned on his oar.

"Oh, no, not to-morrow; not to see your grandmother, to put her to so much trouble, you know; but I will come down here to the landing to see you, David Lindsay."

"Oh, yes, please do."

"Well, good-bye, David Lindsay."

"Good-bye."

"God bless you, David Lindsay!"

"And you, too."

"I won't forget to thank Him when I say my prayers to-night."

"No more will I."

"Well, good-bye again, David Lindsay."

"Good-bye." He did not want to call her Miss de la Vera, much less Miss Gloria; he could not call her little Glo'. He felt, without in the least understanding his feelings, that the first style would be too cold and stiff, and the last perhaps too familiar, so he called her "you," putting all respect in his low and modulated tone. There was much of na-

ture's gentleman in this poor little lad in the ragged straw hat.

He waited, hat in hand, until she had turned and tripped lightly over the broken sea wall and passed out of sight.

Then he covered his head, sat down in his boat, took the oar and reluctantly shoved off from the shore, while she ran home, singing and dancing as she went.

She ran into the house and went directly to seek Sophia.

"Have they been worried about me, 'Phia?" she inquired.

"No, honey; dey's been too much took up wid 'spoundin' an' 'splainin' 'bout yes'day's fuss to fink 'bout you. Leastways, mist'ess was; dough marster did 'quire arter you when dey sat down to dinner an' you wa'n't dere. Says he:

"'Whey's de chile?"

"Says she:

"'Oh, never mind de chile; she's running round de place somew'ere, an' 'Phia can give her her dinner when she comes in. Tell me what you meant by——' somefin' or oder, Lord knows what, honey; but at it dey went, 'spoundin' and 'splainin'. But where is you been all de live-long day, little Glo'?" demanded the woman.

"Oh, 'Phia! I have had such a happy, happy day!" replied the child.

And then she told the cook all about her visit, adding:

"And granny Lindsay begged me to come ever so often!"

"Yes, honey; mighty good ob de ole woman. I knows her, honey, and has buyed mittens ob her—

woolen mittens, which she knitted, honey. But you mustn't go too often, honey. One fing, you mustn't be too intimit wid people ob dat low order ob deciety. Not as I am sayin' but dey may be jes' as good as we is, in de sight ob de Lord, if dey 'haves deir-selves; but still, 'ciety is to be despected. An' another fing, honey, is, dey can't deford it; dey can't, indeed; dey can't deford to 'tain a little lady on fry chickens an' sich, werry often."

Now, the first clause of this speech, concerning caste, slipped through the child's ears without making the slightest impression, but the second clause, about the expense of her visit to the fisherman's cottage, fixed her attention.

"Oh, yes, I thought of that; so I told David Lindsay I could not go to-morrow. 'Phia, you are right," she said, as she ran up stairs. She did not go to the sitting-room to interrupt the *tête-à-tête* of her aunt and uncle, but up to the attic to hunt for bright pieces in the scrap-bag, singing and dancing as she went.

When she met her relatives at tea that night they did not even think of asking her where she had been. They seemed to take it for granted that she had come in soon after dinner, and had been properly attended by 'Phia.

So the child's holiday escaped their notice.

The next morning, Gloria, true to her promise, went down to the landing, where she found David sitting in the old boat, mending nets.

His face broke into a smile as he took off his hat and stood up to receive her.

"Good-morning, David Lindsay. Did you study your book last night?" she inquired, with childish frankness.

"Oh, yes, indeed! And I have brought the geography here with me to take a glimpse of it now and then; but it is such a temptation to slight my work, that I shall have to leave it home after this," replied the lad, still standing, hat in hand.

"Oh, no, don't you do that, David Lindsay! Please don't! See, now, sit down and take up your netting and go on with it, and I will sit by and read the lessons out, and ask the questions at the bottom of the page, so you can tell if you know them."

"Oh, yes, I shall like that; for then I can do my work and learn my lesson at the same time. How good you are to me. What makes you so good to me?"

"Why," she said, opening her blue eyes wide and looking at him with surprise, "don't you know? You are my playmate, and we are going to play school?"

"Oh, yes."

"Now give me the book, David Lindsay, and sit down and go on with your netting. Now, how far had you got?" she inquired, when they were seated opposite each other in the old stranded boat.

"Up to 'What is a cape?'"

"Oh, yes, I can find the place. Now pay attention, David Lindsay," she said, as she took up the book, opened it, assumed a grave, school-ma'am air, and asked:

"'What is a cape?'"

"'A cape is a point of land pretending into the sea,'" answered the pupil.

"'Ex-tending into the sea,' David Lindsay," corrected the little teacher.

"'EX-tending into the sea,'" emphatically amended the pupil.

"That is right. Now, then, 'What is a promontory?'"

"'A promontory is a high point of land pre——'"

"No!"

"EX——"

"Yes."

"EX-tending into the sea!"

"That is right, David Lindsay. You will soon learn geography."

She went on with the lesson, slowly drilling it into the head of the boy, who, with his divided attention, was a fair illustration of "the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties."

But before his little teacher left him that day, he had managed to master the principal divisions of land and water, and better than all, he had been inspired with the love and desire of knowledge.

This was the little lady's mission to the fisher-lad, who, a few years later, in the desperation of her unparalleled extremity, she was to ask to be her husband.

CHAPTER IV

LITTLE GLO'S JOY AND WOE

She grew a flower of mind and eye.

WORDSWORTH.

WE have lingered a little over these first days of their childish friendship, because they were types of so many days that followed, all through the budding spring, the blooming summer, and the fruitful autumn.

The little girl was allowed to do very much as she pleased by her studious uncle and invalid aunt, as it was scarcely possible that she would "run into any danger, or fall into any sin," on so isolated a place as the promontory, where there was neither evil companions or wild beasts to deprave or destroy her.

On the main she might have been more closely looked after; but here she was so safe that not a thought was given to her safety.

So, every day, when it did not rain, little Gloria went down to the landing to see her playmate and read to him while he mended old nets and seines, or made new ones.

At first she was only "playing school," but later on she understood her work and grew interested in the progress of her pupil; and thus her play rose into "a labor of love."

Together they went through the First Book in Geography, and the First Book in History, and the Primary Grammar.

And in this way the child not only advanced her pupil playmate, but refreshed her own memory in those studies, which had been too much neglected since her arrival at the promontory.

A pure, sweet, and faithful affection grew up between the two children, such as we have sometimes seen between two little girls or two little boys; only because neither Gloria nor David had any other playmate to divide their attention, their innocent affection was all the stronger, deeper, and more devoted in its exclusiveness.

Very often, too, the fisher-boy brought an invitation from his grandmother to the little lady to spend a day on the sand-hill which the old dame

called her home. It was always accepted, and always Gloria had "a happy, happy day."

She learned of the old cottager to net, to knit, to sew, to piece patchwork quilts out of scraps of bright calico and white linen, and to plait door-mats out of strips of brilliant cloth or flannel—arts not likely to be of much use to the West Indian heir-ess—but she liked to learn them, notwithstanding.

"Wouldn't I make a right good little cottage girl, after all, Granny Lindsay?" she once asked her old friend, in her childish love of approbation.

"'Ee would, my darling," said the old dame, tenderly. "'Ee would make a helpful, loving little lass by the cottage fire, or a gracious benign princess in a palace. The world's breath of sunshine is for 'ee, my flower, from the cottage to the palace."

"I saw some palaces in Havana, but I would rather have a cottage just like this! Oh, I think a cottage is so nice and cosy, and so—**SPLENDID!**" exclaimed the little girl, with child-like exaggeration and misapplication of words.

So the once lonely child found much joy in her humble friends, giving and receiving good, while spring bloomed into summer, and summer ripened into autumn, and autumn faded into winter.

The came cold, and frost, and change, a bitter change for little Gloria.

Her playmate's work was now the clearing up of the fishing landing, mending boats and oars, and putting them away for winter—work that could not go on parallel with his studies, which were now pursued in the evenings at his own home.

Yet Gloria came down late in the afternoon on every clear day to hear him say his lessons. He told

her that this helped him on "ever so much." And it pleased her.

One day after sunset, when she had heard her pupil's lesson in a very elementary book of astronomy, and had praised his quick apprehension and patient application, and had greatly encouraged him, as she always did, she took leave and ran home, singing and dancing as she went.

When she reached the house, she found 'Phia at the door, looking out for her.

"Oh, for goodness' sake, come in, child," said the woman, in a frightened tone.

"What—what is the matter? What has happened?" cried Gloria, catching terror from the other.

"I dunno. Somefin' awful! Mistress has been goin' on at that rate! She done put de debbil in marster now, sure! Mind, I tell you, honey, dere'll be murder done here some ob dese days! Mark my words!"

With a slight scream the terrified child fled from this prophetic of evil toward the sitting-room, where she heard the sound of high words.

She opened the door and hurried in.

And this was what she saw:

Her uncle standing on the corner of the hearth, with his elbow on the mantel-piece, his head leaning on his hand, whose fingers were clutched into his black hair; his starting black eyes staring down upon the floor; his black brows knitted, his teeth clenched, his face pallid with suppressed passion.

Her aunt, with her white dress and yellow hair in wild disorder, as if her own desperate hands had rent and torn them, was raging up and down the floor like a tigress in her cage, pouring forth all the

gall and venom of her jealous fury, in words that might never be forgiven or forgotten.

Even the child intuitively perceived this, and feared that the man, stung to madness by the woman's venomous tongue, might be driven to some rash act, fatal to them both.

She looked, shuddering, from one to the other.

It was terrible to see so fragile a creature as Eusebie in the power of such a tremendous passion, that seemed as if it must shrivel her frame as a cobweb in a flame. But it was more terrible to see in Marcel's whole aspect the chained devil that might break loose in destroying frenzy at any moment. Full of fear and horror, the child crept trembling to the man's side, put her arms around his waist, which she could just reach, looked up piteously in his face and whispered, in her coaxing tone:

"Uncle, uncle, uncle."

"My little angel," he murmured in reply, as his stern dark face softened and brightened.

"Come away from that man this instant, Gloria," cried Eusebie, stopping in her wild walk and stamping with fury. "Come away from him, I command you! He is not your uncle! You shall not call him uncle! He is a traitor and a villain! Come away, I say!"

The child did not obey; she could not move; she was half paralyzed by fear and horror, and more likely to sink than to stand.

The man put his arm around her, and drew her closer to him.

The woman stamped with fury.

"Let my niece go, you caitiff!" she screamed.

He did not reply to this, but lifted his head and glared at her, while his face darkened and hardened.

The terrified child—terrified for others, not for herself—pressed closely to him, as if, in extremity, she would hold him back by her own baby strength, and moaned, coaxingly:

“Uncle, uncle, uncle dear.”

Again his face changed; he stooped towards her and she laid her cheek against his lips.

“Come away from that man, or I will tear you from him! He is not your uncle! He is no kin to you! He is nothing to you! No! I thank Heaven that not one drop of his false, black blood runs in the veins of any one belonging to me! I have not even a child! Ha! ha! I know the reason! Fiends are not permitted to be fathers!” hissed the woman, with all the hate and scorn that Satan could cast into her face and voice.

Here the man’s eyes glared so fiercely, while his brow grew so black, that the child clasped him in a frantic clutch, moaning, inarticulately, some words of piteous deprecation to restrain him.

“Leave that wretch this instant, I command you! His contact is infamy! Am I not to be obeyed? Oh, then I will snatch you from him!” screamed the woman, in blind fury, as she sprang towards them; but he was too quick for her.

He lifted the half-fainting child in his arms and bore her swiftly out of the room.

“Oh, uncle, she is crazy! She does not know what she says! Don’t mind her! Don’t go back in the room,” coaxed the child, as she put up her hand and stroked and patted his cheek. “Uncle, dear, don’t go back in the room! Come with me to Granny Lindsay’s cottage. Oh, it is so heavenly there.”

But now the man paid but little attention to what she said. He pulled the bell-cord violently.

'Phia ran to answer the bell.

"Take this child up to her bed-room, and stay with her until she goes to sleep," he said, placing the little girl in the strong arms of the colored woman.

"Oh, uncle, don't go back to that room! Don't, or if you do, take me with you!" pleaded the child, caressing his cheek with her hand.

"Go, my dear, go to bed. Pandemonium is no place for babies. Leave me to deal with that demoniac," he answered, grimly, as he turned away.

"Oh, uncle, don't mind her! She don't know what she says!" pleaded the child, stretching out her hands imploringly towards him.

But he had re-entered the room and clapped the door to behind him.

Gloria slid from the woman's arms, sat down on the lowest step of the stairs and burst into tears.

"Come to bed, honey. Don't sit there crying. You can't do no good by dat. You can't 'vent de debbil from habbin' his own way dis night," said 'Phia.

"Oh, I know—I know—I know!" sobbed the child.

"Well, den, come along up to bed, and I'll stay 'long ob you for company."

"Oh, I can't—I can't—I can't—I'm so 'fraid. Let me sit here and wait——"

"Wait for what?"

"Oh, till uncle comes out, or one of them does. Oh, I couldn't go to bed! I couldn't go to sleep and leave them so! Hush!" suddenly exclaimed the child, breaking off in her talk, and bending forward her head and straining her sense in fearful attention, as she heard her uncle's voice in low, tense, bit-

ter tones, and then her aunt's hissing tongue in reply.

The child clasped her hands in a piteous, helpless agony of prayer.

"Come, come, honey, come up to bed, and I will sit by you and tell you pretty stories about foxes and hares, and dwarfs and giants, and little pigs and things, like I used to do," said 'Phia.

"Hush!" exclaimed the child, starting forward, with staring eyes, as the voices in the closed room sunk lower and became more bitter, intense and hissing.

"Come, come, honey, you must come to bed. 'Tain't right to be listening, nohow!" expostulated Sophia, in virtuous indignation.

"Oh! I know it is not! I know it is not! And I can't hear a word they say. I only want to know—want to know—— Oh! I'm so afraid! I'm so afraid, 'Phia!" gasped the child, shuddering from head to foot.

"'Fraid o' what?"

"Oh! 'fraid of something happening!" panted the little girl.

"You can't help of what happens, so what's the use o' bein' afeard?"

At that moment the voices in the closed room arose, both speaking together in violent, clashing frenzy.

"Oh, 'Phia! Let's go in! Let's go in and stand between them!" pleaded the child, springing up.

"Who?—me? No, I thank you, honey! I'm spunky enough, but I ain't gwine to part a wolf from a wildcat, dere!"

"Then I will! I will!" cried the brave child, running and flinging herself against the closed door;

but it was locked fast, and resisted all her efforts, while the angry voices within clashed together in rage.

Suddenly one voice arose above the other, with the roar of an infuriated wild beast. It was her uncle's voice. It cried:

"DIE, then! and end it all!"

There was a heavy fall and groan.

With a shriek of horror Gloria arose and fled to the negro woman and buried her face in her bosom.

The next instant the door was suddenly unlocked and thrown open, and Marcellus de Crespigney—his face haggard, his eyes starting, his hair bristling—ran out, tore open the hall door and rushed from the house out into the winter night.

"I must go see what's happened," hastily muttered the black woman, in a voice full of awe, as she put the child off her knee and went toward the sitting-room.

Gloria, tottering, moaning, sobbing piteously, followed.

The long room was silent and almost dark, for the candles had not been called for, and there was no light except from the smouldering logs of the fire in the open chimney.

Fallen on a rug before this fire, lay a white form.

Sophia stooped to look at it, and instantly started up in horror, crying out:

"Lord have mercy upon us! He has killed her! Marster has murdered mist'ess!"

HE HAD!

There in a little pool of her own blood, lay the small, white face of Eusebie, with its eyes wide open and glazed.

She was quite dead.

CHAPTER V

REMORSE

And well we know your tenderness of heart
And gentle, deep, compassionate remorse.

SHAKESPEARE.

FILLED with horror, that subdued all outward show of emotion, the old black woman lifted the light form of her mistress and bore it across the room to the lounge.

Overcome with grief and terror, the child followed her, shaking as with a hard ague fit.

'Phia laid the fast-stiffening body down on the couch and straightened the limbs, and drew the white dress down to the small, rigid feet.

Little Gloria stood by, clasping the woman's skirts, and crying and sobbing as if her heart would burst.

When 'Phia had decently composed the small body, she went to the bell and rang it sharply, then she turned the key of the door and came back to her post.

She gazed for a moment on the poor, dead face, and then tenderly closed the eyes, keeping her fingers and thumb lightly pressed on the white lids.

Some one came running swiftly along the passage outside, tried the lock, and then rapped.

'Phia went and unlocked the door, holding it a few inches apart, to prevent the entrance of the new-comer.

There were but three servants in that reduced es-

tablishment—'Phia, her husband Laban, and her daughter Lamia.

It was the latter who had come to answer the bell.

"What does yer want, mammy?" inquired the girl, seeing that her mother barred her farther progress.

"You tell your daddy to run here right off. No nonsense, now; not to 'lay a minute, but to run here right off! Yer hear me, don't yer?"

"Yes, mammy; but daddy done gone 'way in de boat to Sinnigger's."

"Whey?" sharply demanded the woman.

"To Sinnigger's, mammy."

"What he done gone dere for, when he wanted so bad here?"

"Marster done sent him dere arter de doctor. Marster come a-rabin' out to de quarter, just now, like he gone rip stabin' mad, an' say how mist'ess wer' took berry ill, an' he hauled off daddy down to de landin' to start him off to Sinnigger's arter de doctor. Is mist'ess dat bad, sure 'nough?"

"Hum! Sent arter de doctor, eh? No use send arter de doctor now. Set a house afire, an' den run for a gourd o' water to put it out! Hum! Dat a blind!" muttered 'Phia.

"Is mist'ess so berry bad?" inquired the girl.

"So yer daddy's gone to Sinnigger's. Whey's yer marster?"

"Marster done gone down to de boat landin' to hurry daddy off, I telled you before, mammy. But, say, is mist'ess bad as all dat comes to?" inquired the girl for the third time.

"It ain't none o' your business! You go right straight down de kitchen and put on a kettle ob

water to heat," replied the woman, closing the door on her daughter.

"Sent for de doctor! Hum. Dat piece ob 'ception ain't a-gwine to do no good. Lord, Lord, did I ebber expect to lib to see dis awful day? Dough I hab offen an' offen prophesied as how murder would be done in dis forsak, unlawful house, did I ebber expect as it would come to pass? He's done it, an' he'll sure to be hung, an' den what is to come ob de place? O-o-m-me," groaned the woman, as she returned to her post of duty.

At these dreadful words, the voice of the child, that had sunk into low sobs, now arose in wails of anguish.

The next moment the door was thrown open and Marcellus de Crespigney hurried into the room, haggard, ghastly, with distended eyeballs and disheveled hair. After rapidly glancing around the room, his eyes fell upon the form lying on the lounge, and he hurried up to it, breathing hard, as he put the questions:

"How is she? How is she? Better?"

The appalled woman silently moved aside and the child crouched down upon the floor and made room for him.

He stooped anxiously over the rigid form, looked deeply into the marble face and uttered a cry which those that heard never forgot in all their after life.

Then dashing his hand violently against his forehead, he flung himself down by the couch, and dropped his head upon the cold breast of his wife, wailing forth:

"Dead! Dead! Dead! And I have killed her! I, a murderer, most accursed!"

He was totally unconscious of the sobbing child

at his feet, or the frowning woman who stood with folded arms, like a black Nemesis, at his back. He had eyes for neither—for nothing but the lifeless form before him.

Gazing on her, pressing his lips to her cold brow, again and again, he broke into the most violent lamentations, the most awful self-accusations.

Then hiding his head in the folds of her raiment, he groaned aloud and seemed to swoon into silence.

Again, with an accession of frenzy, he started up and began striding to and fro, from end to end of the long room, uttering the most agonized self-reproaches, and calling down the most horrible maledictions upon his own head.

This terrible scene went on until at last the weeping child, her heart half broken with grief for her who was beyond suffering, and for him who still suffered, arose from her crouching position and dried her tears and tried to still her sobs, and went to the maddened man, as he raged up and down the floor, invoking imprecations on his own head.

She came behind him, pleading in her pitiful tones:

“Oh, uncle, do not curse yourself! Pray! The Lord is merciful!” And she put her little hand out to touch his.

Then he whirled around upon her like a furious wind, his eyes flashing lightnings of frenzy, his voice thundering:

“Avaunt! Begone! Let no innocent thing come near me!”

The child turned and fled and buried her face in the lap of Sophia, who was now seated by the dead body of her mistress.

"Let me take you to bed, little Glo'," whispered the woman.

"No—no," sobbed the aggrieved and terrified child. "No—no. I want to stay near him! I—I want to stay near him!"

Three dreadful hours passed in this way, with little change.

Sophia sat near the head of the lounge, keeping constant watch over the corpse.

Little Gloria crouched on the floor at her feet, with her head hidden in the old woman's lap.

Marcellus de Crespigny raged up and down the floor, breathing maledictions upon himself, or he dropped down before the dead body of his wife, uttering awful groans or lapsing into more awful silence.

An hour after midnight there came a sound of footsteps, crunching through the frozen snow, and followed by an alarm on the iron knocker at the front door, which announced the arrival of Dr. Prout, the physician of St. Inigoes.

De Crespigny, almost exhausted by the long continued violence of his emotions, was now calm with the calmness of prostration and despair.

"Nothing serious the matter, I hope!" said the cordial voice of the doctor, as he entered the room, ushered by Laban, and met by Colonel de Crespigny, who advanced to receive him.

The physician of St. Inigoes was a short, stout, round-bodied little old man, with a bald head, a smooth face, cheery voice and manner. He was always dressed in speckless black from head to foot.

"Nothing serious, I hope? Only one of madame's usual nervous attacks, eh?" he cheerfully de-

manded, as he shook hands with the master of the house.

"It is her last attack, sir. She is dead," answered De Crespigny, in steady tones.

"Dead? Lord bless my soul, I am—I—dead, do you say?" exclaimed the doctor, in surprise and confusion.

"Yes, sir, she is gone. Come and see."

"Lord bless my soul, I am very much shocked!" exclaimed the good little man, as he followed the bereaved husband to the lounge on which the body of the ill-fated wife lay.

Old 'Phia lifted the white handkerchief that covered the white face, and then withdrew to give way to her master and the doctor, leading the trembling child away with her.

"How did this happen?" solemnly inquired the doctor, as he gazed down on the waxen face, with the stream of scarlet blood curdled from the corner of the mouth down upon the chin and throat, where it lay in a thick cake.

"Through me. I killed her," answered De Crespigny, in the same dread monotone in which all his answers to the doctor's questions had been made.

Dr. Prout turned and gazed at him in amazement for a moment, and then said gravely and kindly:

"My dear friend, this shock has been too much for you. Compose yourself. This unhappy lady has had a fatal hemorrhage of the lungs, such as I feared for a long time past; such as I warned you might be the result of any unusual excitement."

"Just so, you warned me, yet I killed her."

The doctor looked at him in a great trouble, then replaced the handkerchief over the quiet face of the

dead, and taking his arm led him to a distant sofa, placed him on it, took the seat beside him, and said :

“De Crespigny, you must not say such false things about yourself. Think what the effect upon other minds may be.”

“They are not false; they are true. Listen to me, Dr. Prout. You know you warned me that excitement might prove fatal to my unhappy wife.”

“Yes.”

“You know how prone she was to excitement. You knew her delicate health and her extreme nervous irritability?”

“I knew the weakness of her lungs and the violence of her temper. I knew all that, Colonel de Crespigny, before you ever saw her face.”

“Let that pass,” said Marcel, waving his hand impatiently. “You warned me against the danger of excitement for her. I was not man enough to heed your warning in her behalf. I have been frenzied to-night, Dr. Prout. But attend! This evening I irritated her, excited, taunted, maddened, murdered her!”

“Oh, my dear Colonel. Oh, tut, tut, tut!”

“But hear me! I must tell some one. Oh, this necessity of confession—this afternoon a dispute arose between us, indeed I know not how—I should have calmed, soothed, conciliated her, knowing how dangerous was excitement to that poor, fragile being! But I did not. When she accused me, I recriminated; when she reproached me, I retorted. ‘One word brought on another,’ as the people say. She grew frantic and knew not what she said, I do verily believe. Yet her words stung me to frenzy, and, forgetting my manhood, I—I——”

Here Marcel de Crespigny’s voice broke, and he

covered his brow with his hand and dropped his head upon his breast with a look of unutterable shame.

"You never could have raised your hand against your wife, De Crespigney?" exclaimed the doctor, in a harsh voice, and shrinking away from his companion.

Up went the fine head, and wide open with astonishment at such a question the splendid eyes, as Marcel replied:

"Who—I? I raise my hand against that poor little, fragile being? I raise my hand against any woman? I may be a devil, Dr. Prout, but I am not—a—what would you call a man who would strike a woman anyway? I am sure I don't know."

"Pardon me the base thought, De Crespigney. It was but a passing thought. Scarcely that indeed. But what do you mean, then, by your self-accusations, my poor friend?"

"I killed her all the same. If I did not strike with my hand, I struck with the poisoned arrow of the tongue. Is any serpent's sting so venomous as the tongue? Her tongue had stung me to frenzy. She accused me, poor, wrong-headed child that she was, she accused me of marrying her for money, for this miserable, sterile promontory, with its ruinous house and worthless land. I retorted by telling her I married her for pity. Yes!" cried Marcel, suddenly starting up, and striding to and fro with rising excitement, "yes, villain! caitiff! cur that I was, I told my wife—I told that delicate and sensitive creature that I had married her only for pity! And worse, far worse than that, I saw her pale face grow scarlet at my cruel, shameful words, then, white as death, as she sank upon a chair and placed

her hand upon her chest. I did not care. The devil had possession of me.

"‘You will kill me,’ she gasped.

"‘DIE, then, and end it all!’ I answered, brutally, for I half suspected she was acting all this illness. But the next instant she fell heavily forward, with the blood welling from her throat."

"Gracious Heaven!" murmured the doctor in a low tone.

"I remembered what you had warned me to do in case of such an emergency. I went and laid her down on the rugs quietly, and then ran out and dispatched a servant for you. In ten minutes I was back again at her side, but—she was gone."

"I came the very moment that I was summoned, but the way was long," said the doctor.

"You could have done no good, as it turned out, even if you had been in the house. The fault was mine. I killed her! I killed the poor little fragile woman, whose only fault was to love me too well, too jealously, too exactly, too insanely!" exclaimed De Crespigny, heaping up words as men will do under any strong excitement. "Yes, I killed my delicate, sensitive wife! I killed her with cruel, shameful, unmanly words. Oh, accursed VILLAIN!" he cried, smiting his forehead with a violent blow, as he strode up and down the room.

Dr. Prout went up to him, took his arm and drew it within his own, and saying, with the authority of a keeper over a madman:

"Come, De Crespigny, you must go with me. I am going to take you off to bed and give you an opiate. You, Laban, there! Lead the way to your master's chamber."

Marcel, whose stormy fits of emotion had reduced

him to the weakness of infancy, submitted himself to be led from the room, preceded by his servant, Laban.

Then there was left in the apartment of death, with the corpse, the old watcher, Sophia, and the child, Gloria, who had sobbed herself to sleep with her head on the black woman's lap.

A few minutes after the doctor had led De Crespigny away, however, Lamia softly entered the room and whispered:

"The hot water is ready, mammy."

"Yes. Well, now take this child and carry her up to her room, and undress her without waking her, if possible, and put her to bed. But if she do wake, you stay with her till she goes to sleep again, an' then you come down here an' help me. You know what's happened of by dis time, don't you?"

"Oh, yes; mist'ess hab broken a blood-vessel, an' 'deed——"

"Yes! Lord forgive me! I did fink by de way he ran on, as marster had done it hisself! I thanks my Lord it wasn't him, and dere'll be no crowner's quest, nor hanging! Dere, gal, take de poor dear chile and carry her to bed. Well, poor mist'ess, I hopes de Lord will hab messy on her soul! Anyways, dere won't be no more quarrellin' an' fightin' an' 'fendin' an' provin' an' 'spoundin' an' 'splainin' in de house to drive a body ravin', 'stracted mad. Marse ain't 'clined to quarrel much hisself, an' if he was, he couldn't quarrel by hisself 'dout some one else to help him," growled old 'Phia, as she lifted the child and laid her, still sleeping, in the arms of Lamia.

The girl took the exhausted child up to her room,

undressed, and put her into bed without awakening her.

Once, indeed, the poor little creature half waked as she was finally laid on her pillow; but she only sobbed and swooned away to sleep.

Lamia stood by the bed watching her for a few minutes, and seeing that she was not likely to wake for hours to come, left the chamber and went down stairs to join her "mammy" in the room of death.

Together they washed and dressed the dead, and laid it out neatly on the long table to await the undertaker. Then 'Phia lighted a couple of wax candles and placed one at the head and one at the foot.

Lastly, the two set the room in perfect order, replenished the fire, and finally took up their positions, sitting one on the right, and the other on the left of the body, to watch until daylight.

Dr. Prout remained all night with his sorrowing friend, and then, after an early breakfast the next morning, departed to make, at the request of Colonel de Crespigny, the necessary arrangements for the funeral.

When Marcel de Crespigny re-entered the room of death he found it filled with an atmosphere of repose that calmed even his perturbed spirit. He went to the table and turned down the white linen cover, and saw the face of the dead soothed into a peaceful beauty such as it had never known in life. He gazed on it for some minutes, and then stooped and pressed his lips to the cold, quiet brow with more tenderness than he had ever kissed the living woman. Then he reverently covered the face again, and stole silently from the room.

Little Gloria slept the deep sleep of mental and

physical prostration. She did not wake until noon. Then she awoke to memory, and to an agony of grief that refused to be comforted.

"And not a lady about de house to look arter de poor chile! Not eben a white 'oman anywhere in reach. An' me an' Lamia dat oberloaded with work, along ob dis drea'ful business!" groaned 'Phia, as she trotted from chamber to parlor, and from parlor to kitchen on her multifarious duties.

Even in the midst of her lamentations she met relief. In the kitchen she found David Lindsay and his grandmother, just arrived, and waiting to see if they could be of any use.

David, on coming to work that morning, had met Dr. Prout and had anxiously inquired if any one was sick at the "house," and in answer had received the news of Madame de Crespigny's death.

Then remembering the limited resources of service in that small and isolated household, David, with the thoughtfulness of a boy who had long had a man's responsibilities on his own young shoulders, re-entered his boat and rowed rapidly across to the little sandy isle, to tell his grandmother, and even to suggest her returning with him.

The gentle old dame saw even more clearly than her grandson had done, the need they had of her at Promontory Hall. So she lost no time in getting ready to go, and in less than half an hour from the moment when she received the news, she stood in Sophia's kitchen, earnestly offering her services.

"If you'll only look after de chile, which I b'lieve you is a great favorite 'long o' her, dat is all as I shall ax ob you," said 'Phia.

And so the sweet old dame "looked after" little Gloria, and comforted her, night and day, during

the three days that preparations for the funeral went on.

Meanwhile, David Lindsay made himself useful in many ways at the Hall during the day, and at night returned to the little isle to take care of the house in the absence of its mistress.

Often Gloria tried to see and console her stricken uncle; but he always refused to have her, saying:

"Let all innocent beings keep aloof from me."

Thus, in alternations between the frenzy of remorse and the stupor of despair, Marcel de Crespigny passed the interval between the death and burial of his "murdered wife," as, in his morbid self-reproach, he called her.

"Words kill!" he answered to the expostulations of his friend, the doctor. "Words kill, and I killed her with cruel words! The last words I spoke to her—the last words her failing senses heard from me—were cruel, murderous words! They killed her! What though no law can drag me before an earthly tribunal to answer for her life? Before the awful judgment seat of the God in my own soul, I stand a self-convicted murderer!"

The good doctor shrugged his shoulders, reflecting that it was of no use to argue with a man whose morbid sensibility made him, for the time being, a monomaniac.

Marcel de Crespigny, who had so greatly distinguished himself for martial courage and ability during the Mexican war, was weaker than a child where his sympathies were involved.

This weakness had betrayed him into all the misery of his life. It had drawn him, in his early youth, into a marriage with a plain, sickly, faded woman, who loved him with that morbid, exclusive,

absorbing passion that, disappointed, sometimes sends its victim to the madhouse or the grave.

He had married her—let the truth be here told—from the promptings of compassion alone. He had given her all that he had to give—sympathy, tenderness, service. But this was not love—not the love she craved and missed. Hence came humiliation, morbid brooding, and the monomania that turned all his kindly acts and motives into outrage and offence.

Had children blessed their union, and so divided her thoughts and affections, or had they—the husband and wife—though childless, lived in a city, where society must have claimed some of her attention, and taught her something of life, she might have been much healthier in mind and body, and their marriage might have been happier.

But in the drear solitude of Promontory Hall, with no children to fondle, no society but that of the studious, intellectual man whom she vainly and madly loved, there could have been but one of two results for her—madness or death. The most merciful of the two was hers.

But it was also impossible that De Crespigney's mind, under all these circumstances, should have retained its healthy tone, or that his long patience should not have at last become exhausted, so that in one moment of unexampled exasperation he lost the self control of years and told her the truth—the truth, not “in love,” but in wrath and scorn, that had slain her.

Now he would not seek to palliate his fault or justify himself. He would not remember the jealousy, the violence, the acrimony with which she had driven him to frenzy; he would only remember

her strong love for him and his secret indifference to her, and his deeply sympathetic, compassionate and conscientious spirit suffered pangs of remorse that would seem to others morbid, excessive and unjustifiable.

On the fifth day following the catastrophe, the remains of Eusebie de Crespigny were placed in an elegant rosewood casket and conveyed by boat to the little Gothic chapel on La Compte's Landing, where they were met by a small number of old friends and neighbors, and where, after the religious services were over, they were consigned to the family vault under the chancel.

Immediately after the funeral, Marcel de Crespigny utterly broke down and fell ill of a brain fever.

Dr. Prout, taking authority on himself in the household anarchy, installed Mrs. Lindsay as nurse, and wrote to his family.

CHAPTER VI

MISS GRIP

She is active, stirring, all fire,
Cannot rest, cannot tire.

BROWNING.

WITHIN ten days after the despatch of the doctor's letter it was answered in person by the colonel's maiden aunt, who, after many misadventures, reached Promontory Hall in the afternoon of a very bitter cold January day.

Miss Agrippina de Crespigny, called by her

familiars Miss Grip, was a slight, wiry little woman, with a dark skin, sharp nose and chin, small, keen, brilliant black eyes, tightly curled, bright black hair, and a trim figure, clothed in a close black cashmere gown, with stiff white linen collar and cuffs—a tough little body she was, whose sixty years of life's hard buffeting had not seemed to have saddened, weakened or in any other way aged, but rather matured, hardened and strengthened.

For now, in the very depth of one of the hardest winters that ever was known here, she had undertaken an arduous journey of more than twelve hundred miles, from the green savannahs of the "Sunny South" to the frozen regions of the icy North, traveling without rest, both day and night, by railroads, stage-coaches, and tavern hacks, and at length arrived at her destination, none the worse for her performance, without showing the slightest sign of suffering from cold or from fatigue.

The last half-day of her hard week's journey had been peculiarly trying. She had reached St. Inigoes by stage-coach, early in the morning. After a hasty breakfast she had started in the springless carryall belonging to the inn, for the Promontory. When she reached the shore she had to wait hours there for the tide to ebb before she could cross over the neck of land that connected the island cape to the main.

Even then the passage was difficult and dangerous from the piled up blocks of ice that lay across the road.

"I really thought that I was coming to a habitable part of the globe, at least; but this is Nova Zembla! Just Nova Zembla and nothing else! A

waste fragment of a continent, flung out as useless into an arctic sea!" said Miss Grip, as the old carriage pitched and tumbled along the narrow ice-encumbered isthmus towards the snow-clad promontory.

"I hab heern it called a many hard names, Miss, but I nebber heered it called Dissemblance afore," replied the negro driver.

"Well, then, hold your tongue and mind your horses, or you'll upset me," rather irrelevantly concluded Miss Grip.

When the rickety carryall drew up before the old iron gate in the old stone wall that enclosed the stern-looking gray-stone house, Miss Grip gave voice once more.

"Is it a police-station, or a penitentiary, or a warehouse, or a fort, or something of the sort? This never was meant for a gentleman's private residence."

But she did not even wait to cross the threshold before she seized the reins of government. As soon as she alighted from the carryall she began to issue her orders to the driver.

"Take the carriage around to the stables—of course there are stables and you must find them—put up the carriage, feed and water the horses, then come around to the kitchen. You must get your supper before you go back. Stop! take my trunk off first and bring it up into the house."

The driver began to obey these orders as the brisk little woman ran up the steps and sounded an alarm on the iron knocker.

Laban opened the door, and the driver carried in the trunk and put it down on the hall floor and departed about his other business.

"How is your master?" sharply demanded Miss Grip of the astonished negro.

"Jes' de same," replied the man, as if the answer had been rapped out of him.

"How the same?"

"Onsensible."

Miss Grip immediately took off her bonnet and shawl, and flung them on the hat-rack, saying:

"Show me the way up through this old jail to the den where your master lies."

The man looked daggers at the insolent little woman, but he obeyed her, and led the way to the spacious upper chamber where the patient lay, watched by old Mrs. Lindsay and patient little Glo'.

Miss Agrippina nodded silently to the nurse, then kissed the child and sent her out of the room, saying that a sick room was no wholesome place for a little girl.

Now that Miss De Crespigny had come to take her proper place at the bedside of her suffering nephew, good Mrs. Lindsay found herself at liberty to return home and look after her own little affairs.

The child wept at parting with her old friend, and said:

"I know there is no work to do at the landing while all this snow and ice is piled up everywhere; but, oh, do please to send David Lindsay to see me sometimes. I shall be so lonesome when you are gone."

The gentle old dame promised to do so, and went away to look for Laban to row her over to the little isle.

This though a very short, was not always a very safe trip, at this season of the year, when floating blocks of ice endangered the little boat, and it was

only by watchfulness and skill that it was ever accomplished safely.

From that hour Miss Grip administered the government of Promontory Hall.

She was an accomplished nurse and housekeeper, and not at all an unkindly woman, notwithstanding her quick ways. She held a consultation with the doctor on his next visit, and learned from him the facts of the case, of which she would not inquire of the servants or even permit them to speak.

"It was the most unhappy marriage I ever heard of. But then I always knew Marcel would make a mess of it," was her only comment on the story.

Then she devoted herself to her sick nephew, who, in his delirium, was always holding imaginary conversations with his lost wife, and sealing a reconciliation, such as in the past had always followed one of their quarrels.

Even Miss Grip would sometimes smile and sometimes weep to hear him say:

"I know it, my dear. I knew you did not mean all that you said. I knew you were excited. Yes, I know, for all that, you love me, Eusebie. There, say no more about it, dear. Let us try to forget it," and so forth, for hours, until exhaustion and stupor would follow.

It was a long illness. The February thaw had come and melted the "iceberg," as Miss Grip called the snow-clad promontory, before Marcel de Crespigny passed the crisis of his fever, and then he was so weak in mind as well as body that another month passed away before he had gradually recovered strength enough to sit up in his easy-chair and converse a little.

Next, when he was able to bear a sustained dis-

course, he gave Miss Grip his own version of the fatal quarrel that had precipitated the catastrophe, not sparing himself in the least, but heaping bitter reproaches upon his own head, as he had done from the first.

"Yet," said Miss Agrippina, "I cannot see that you were so much to blame. But, in any case, it is of no use to look back. All that you can do now is to atone in the future for what you have done amiss in the past. She has left you no child of her own; but she has left a little niece whom she loved. Be a good father to that orphan."

"I will do so," answered De Crespigny, very meekly.

"And now, Marcel, take my advice: Whatever else you do, don't make a fool of yourself again by getting married. Such a bookworm as you has no business with a wife. So, don't be a fool."

"I will not," sighed the colonel, obediently.

When he grew stronger still he sent for the little portable cabinet in which his lost wife was accustomed to keep her papers, and he had it placed upon a stand between his easy-chair and the open wood fire, and he went through her letters, with the intention of burning all of them, lest they should by unforeseen accident fall into other hands.

And here he found what newly awoke his grief and his remorse. It was her last will, duly drawn up, signed, sealed, and witnessed, in which she bequeathed to him the whole of her real and personal estate. Folded in with this document was a letter, dated some time back, and addressed to her husband, to be opened after her death. It seemed to have been written just after one of their fierce quarrels and sorrowful reconciliations. In it she wrote:

"I feel that some day I shall die suddenly in some one of my mad fits of excitement. I feel that when that shall have happened without time for reconciliation, I shall want to speak to you from the other life. I shall want to reach my hand across the great gulf that will divide us and be reconciled to you from the other life. But that may not be my privilege, so I write to you now, and leave with you, for that time, what I feel that I shall want to say to you then."

And here followed a most pathetic plea for a charitable construction of her confessed infirmities of temper and a prayer for the merciful remembrance of her love. She said not one word about the will she had made securing all her property to him; she was silent on that subject, as if she thought it of little importance compared to the theme upon which she wrote, her own morbid, maddened affections.

The letter so agitated the convalescent that he suffered a relapse of several days' duration.

As the spring advanced, however, he improved in health, strength and spirits. The season was early that year, so that by the middle of March every vestige of ice and snow had disappeared, and by the first of April the fields were green with grass and the trees blossoming for fruit. And then Marcel de Crespigny was able to sit out on the front porch and enjoy the resurrection of nature with a new sense of life.

Meanwhile the business on the fishing landing was opening briskly, and, among other workmen, David Lindsay found a plenty to do, patching boats and mending nets and clearing beaches.

Again little Gloria went daily down to the old sea wall and sat and read to her playmate while he mended old seines or netted new ones. She read to him the school histories of Rome, Greece and England, while the hungry mind of the boy swallowed and assimilated them all.

Under the shadow of the old sea wall the life of the children was an idyl in Arcadie until one unhappy day, when their innocent affection fell under the notice of Miss Agrippina de Crespigney, and shocked that lady's sense of propriety in the most outrageous manner.

She was giving the poor old manor-house a fit of the severest hydrophobic convulsions, which she called a spring cleaning, turning every trunk, box, wardrobe, closet and store-room inside out, and raising dust that had rested undisturbed for ages, when, thinking that she needed more help, she determined to walk down to the landing, where, she was told, the fisher-boy was at work, and to send him to fetch his grandmother to her assistance. When she reached the old sea wall and stood in the breach, this is what she saw before her :

A little fire kindled on the sands, and some fresh fish laid on the coals to broil ; a little napkin spread on a flat stone, with two little blue-edged plates and green-handled knives and forks, a bunch of radishes, a bunch of onions, and two rolls of wheat bread, and lastly, the two children sitting, side by side, in the old boat, reading from the same book.

Miss Agrippina raised up both her hands in speechless amazement. Then controlling herself, she forbore all reproaches to the little, unconscious offender, and only saying: "Gloria, my love, your

uncle wants you. Go right home," came calmly down to the scene.

Quite innocent of any impropriety, the little girl rose obediently, and saying:

"I am sorry, David Lindsay, that I cannot stay and take dinner with you to-day; but poor uncle, you know! I must go to him directly; you must take the book along with you and read it at home to-night," she ran lightly along, tripped over the broken wall, and home.

Miss Agrippina turned to dispatch the boy on his errand after his grandmother.

David promptly left his culinary preparations, unmoored his boat, and rowed rapidly for the isle.

And so the children's little, innocent *al fresco* feast was spoiled; but that was nothing to what happened afterwards.

CHAPTER VII

CHANGES

All she did was but to wear out the day;
Full oftentimes she leave of him did take;
And oft again devised somewhat to say,
Which she forgot, whereby excuse to make;
So loth was she his company to forsake.

SPENSER.

MISS AGRIPPINA DE CRESPIGNEY stood in the breach of the old stone sea-wall, watching David Lindsay as he rowed rapidly from the shore.

"This intimacy must be stopped at once," she

said; "that poor, neglected child must be looked after and not allowed to associate with every rude boor that she may happen to meet on this dreary promontory! She must be sent to school. I will speak to Colonel de Crespigny on the subject at once."

So muttering, Miss Grip turned, clambered down from her standpoint and walked rapidly towards the house.

When she got there she found little Glo' standing between her uncle's knees, as he reclined in his chip-bottomed arm-chair in the front porch.

"Why, how is this, Aunt Agrippina? This child says you told her I sent for her. It was surely a mistake. I never sent for her," said Colonel de Crespigny, as soon as he saw Miss Grip.

"No one said you did. I told her you wanted her, and so you do want her, or at least you ought to," grimly replied the lady.

"Why, what on earth do you mean, Miss de Crespigny?"

"You know very well what I mean, or you should know," severely retorted Miss Grip.

"Upon my sacred word of honor, I don't! Pray explain yourself," entreated the colonel.

Instead of replying to him, Miss Agrippina deliberately divested herself of her bonnet and shawl and gave them to the child, saying:

"Here, my dear, take these up into my room and put them away carefully."

"Now, then, what do you mean?" demanded the colonel, when the little girl had disappeared into the house.

"I mean that you want your ward to stay at home

until she goes to school, which she must do very soon," said Miss Grip, decidedly.

"Go to school? How can she? There is no school fit for her within fifty miles of this place."

"Certainly not. She must be sent away to a first-class boarding-school."

"I cannot consent to that, Aunt Agrippina. I cannot, and will not. I cannot part with her. Besides, it would break her heart to send her away."

"Fiddle!" said Miss Grip.

"Yet I see that she should have instruction. I will advertise for a first-class resident governess."

"You will not do any such thing, Colonel Marcellus de Crespigny! A resident governess in the house, indeed! Why, she would marry you in six months!"

"Absurd!" indignantly exclaimed the colonel.

"Oh, yes, you may call it 'absurd,' if you like! But I know you, Marcellus! Any needy woman, any single woman, I mean, young or old, plain or pretty, shut up in the same house with you, would marry you out of hand!"

"You must think me a very weak man," said the colonel.

"I do," said Miss Grip.

"Thank you," said De Crespigny, with an air of chagrin.

"Weak where your sympathies are concerned, Marcel, and that is no discredit to you, my dear! But I'll not have any wandering woman making her market at your expense! No, sir! no resident governess, if you please!"

"I hope, Aunt Agrippina, you will permit me to be master of my own house, so far as to say who shall or shall not make a part of my family."

"Oh, by all means, and take the consequences, too, for if you engage a resident governess, I shall leave the house. And after I go what respectable woman, do you suppose, would come and live here with a young widower, and no lady of his family to keep her in countenance? Ah, ha! I have you there, Marcel! Yes, and I mean to keep you there!"

"It is rather unkind of you, Aunt Agrippina; but I shall not argue the point, since I know from experience that nothing ever turned you from any resolution that you had formed. Still, I say, it is very unkind of you," said the colonel, with a wounded air.

"It is for your own good, honey. If I were to stay here and let a resident governess come, she would make you the captive of her bow and spear, and marry you right under my very nose! It will not do, Marcel. The child must be sent to school."

"But she is so young yet. Not nine years old until June. You or I can direct her studies for the next year or two."

"I don't see it. Besides, who is to look after her out of school hours? I tell you, Marcel, it is not only for her education that she is to be sent from home."

"For what other reason, I pray you?"

"To keep her out of bad company."

"'Bad company?' Bad company, in this remote, isolated place?" exclaimed the colonel, gazing at the lady in surprise.

"Yes! bad company, I say! the very worst company! I think it is a shame, a burning and a crying shame," exclaimed Miss Grip, firing up at the sound of her own words—"a burning and a crying shame that she, Maria da Gloria de la Vera, a Countess of

Portugal by birth, should be left here to run wild like any little savage, with no better companion than a low-born, ignorant fisher-boy! There!"

"Lord—bless—my—soul—alive!" cried the colonel, sarcastically.

"Where do you suppose I found them?" sharply demanded Miss Grip, whose temper was rising.

"Found—whom?" coolly inquired the colonel.

"Your niece and ward, the Countess Maria, and your hired servant, David, the fisher-boy."

"I wish you would not be ridiculous, my dear aunt. What good does that title do our poor little girl, here in democratic America? Why, even her father, a Portuguese nobleman by birth, but a staunch republican in principle, dropped his title when he transferred his interests to the United States," said Marcel.

"Then he had no right to do it, and his act is of no consequence to his daughter. She is the Countess de la Vera, and she would be recognized as such in any other civilized country except in democratic America, as you call it. But that is not the point."

"What is the point, then?"

"I asked you just now, where you supposed I found them?"

"In a boat, on the water?"

"No; sitting on an old, overturned boat under the broken sea-wall, side by side, with an open book before them, both their hands on the covers, both faces bent over the same page."

"God bless the child! She was trying to teach the lad!" ejaculated Marcel, with a smile of sympathetic pleasure in his eyes.

"I say it is most improper! most indecorous! most objectionable! for the little Countess Maria

to be sitting down on an old boat side by side with a low, vulgar, ill-bred fisher-boy!" exclaimed Miss Grip.

"Stop, stop, my dear lady! You go too far, indeed! David Lindsay is a poor fisher lad, certainly; but he is not, in any sense of the words, low, vulgar, or ill-bred."

"Now, how can he be anything else?"

"By intuition. He has the intuitions of a little gentleman."

"And now, since you talk like that, I am more determined than ever that the child shall go to school," said Miss Grip.

"It is of no earthly use for you to persist in saying so, Aunt Agrippina. I cannot part with little Glo'. She is the sunshine of my home—the light of my life! Besides, she loves me so that she could not bear to leave me. The separation would grieve her to death."

"Fiddle!" scornfully repeated Miss Grip.

The reappearance of little Glo' interrupted the conversation, and the subject was dropped for the time being.

There is an Indian song which teaches a good lesson in perseverance:

"If a man talk a very long time,
If a man talk a very long time,
If a man talk a very long time,
He will bore a hole through a rock."

And if a woman so talk, the effect is surer as well as swifter.

At the very first opportunity Miss Agrippina de

Crespigney resumed the subject of sending her niece to school, and she talked a "very long time."

Again and again she returned to the theme, and longer and longer she talked. She would listen to no proposal of home teaching. She would come to no compromise whatever. She would send the little "countess" to a first-class French and English Ladies' Academy.

But it was not until late in the summer that Colonel de Crespigney, worn out with importunity and convinced, though against his will, by argument, reluctantly consented to the plan.

Miss Agrippina acted promptly on his decision, lest it should be repented of and withdrawn.

"This is Friday, the 14th of August," she said. "I will myself leave here with the child on Monday, the 17th. We will go to Baltimore and stop at some good family boarding-house. Then I will go to the Academy of the Sacred Heart, and make an engagement to enter her on the reopening of the school exercises on the first of September, get a list of the articles required for her school uniform and outfit, have them purchased and made up in the interval, enter my little lady on the opening day, and come home. All this will take me about a fortnight, I suppose," said Miss Grip.

And the same day she packed up a few changes of clothes for herself and her niece, and then communicated to the child that she was to go to school on the following Monday.

Her words conveyed but a tithe of the truth to the inexperienced little girl, who forthwith went to her "dee-ar Marcel" for further information.

She found him in his favorite seat—the old chip-bottomed arm-chair, on the front porch.

"Am I really going away from you to school, uncle dee-ar?" she inquired, seating herself on his knees and putting her arms around his neck.

"Yes, my darling. You are a little lady, and must be educated, cultivated, refined, accomplished. And so you must go to school," replied "Marcel," laying her tender cheek against his hirsute face.

"But I don't want to be all that, uncle. I want to stay with you always, and play with David Lindsay."

Marcel caressed her tenderly, and explained gently the absolute necessity of her submission to the social law that required her to be educated.

"Won't you be lonesome without your little Glo', Marcel, dee-ar!"

"Very lonesome indeed, my child."

"And won't you be very sorry?" she asked, smoothing his hair with her small hand.

"No, not very sorry, darling. I shall be glad because it will be for your good," said De Crespigney, trying to look as if he meant what he said.

"You have got Aunty Agrippina and your books and your music to keep you company. But David Lindsay! Oh, Marcel, David Lindsay!" said the child, as the tears filled her eyes.

"What of him, my pet?" asked the colonel very gravely.

"Oh, he has got nobody but me, and no music nor books but what I bring him. Oh, poor David Lindsay! What will he do?" sighed Glo'.

"He will do very well, my dear. He will be busy with his fishing."

"But he can't be always fishing! And he will have nobody to play with, or to read with, or to bring him books, or—oh, dear! what shall we do?"

Oh, I can't go to school, Marcel! I can't! How can I go and leave you and David Lindsay?" broke forth the child, in a wail of distress.

"I and David Lindsay must try and console each other, in our little lady's absence, with the thought that it is all for her good that she has gone. We shall do very well," said the colonel, more gravely and tenderly than he had yet spoken.

"Oh, will you? Will you? Will you comfort David Lindsay? Will you lend him some books? Oh, he is so hungry for books, uncle dee-ar. I am going to give him all mine before I go away; but mine are only a few, and he will soon read them all. Will you lend him some? Will you, Marcel, dee-ar?"

"Yes, darling, I will indeed. I will, my precious. I will charge myself with the welfare of your little friend, and he shall not want books, nor advice, nor anything that he may require, if he wishes to cultivate his mind," said Marcel de Crespigny, who was absolutely without any prejudices of rank.

"And oh! will you love David Lindsay, and let him love you, like I do?"

"Like you do? What do you mean, my child?"

"Like I love you! Will you love him and let him love you, like I love you?" she pleaded, laying her soft cheek against his face—a frequent caress of hers.

He kissed her for all reply.

It was too late that Friday evening to see her playmate. She had been reading with him all that afternoon, and had taken leave of him before she knew that she was to go to school. Now she felt sure that he had gone home, and she should not

have a chance to see him and tell him until the next day.

Still, she was thinking more of her playmate than of any one else, simply because he had more need of her than any one else. So she went up to her little book-case and took down all her books and packed them in a trunk that would hold about twenty-five or thirty miscellaneous volumes, comprising nearly all of Peter Parley's and other juvenile works, that were held in great favor at that time. With these she put in two slates, a dozen graded copy-books, pens, pencils, india-rubber, blotting-papers, inkstand, and every requisite of the school-desk that she could find.

Then she locked it and called up old Laban, and said to him:

"I want you to shoulder this and take it down to the boat-house for me."

The old servant looked at the trunk and looked at the child, scratched his head, and declared:

"I don't know what you mean, Miss Glo'."

The little creature was not disposed to take airs on herself; so she kindly explained to the old man what she intended to do with the trunk, adding truthfully:

"I told Uncle Marcel, and he did not object."

Old Laban then shouldered the trunk and followed his little mistress down the stairs, out of the front door, and so down to the end of the promontory, through the breach in the old sea-wall, and finally to a dilapidated little boat-house, where she directed him to place it.

"It will be safe there until the morning and then I can give it to David Lindsay, and he can carry it away in his boat."

The sun had set half an hour before, and it was growing dark, so little Glo' and her sable companion hurried from the shore back to the house.

"Saturday and Sunday! I have only got two days to be with Uncle Marcel and David Lindsay," said little Glo' to herself when she awoke the next morning.

And to make the most of her time, she hurried out of bed, dressed herself quickly, and ran down stairs.

Her aunt and uncle had not yet appeared, so she said to the cook:

"Just give me a cup of milk and a biscuit, 'Phia, and I will eat my breakfast and go. It is my last day but one at home, and I must make the most of it."

The old woman complied with her request, and the little girl quickly dispatched her meal, snatched her straw hat from the rack in the hall, and ran out of the house and down to the beach.

She stood in the breach of the broken wall and looked all around for her playmate, but did not see him, and she thought she was going to be disappointed; but just then she heard the sound of a hammer, and knew it must come from one held in his hand, for there was no one else who worked on the beach.

She ran down and found him nailing loose boards on the old boat-house.

"Oh! David Lindsay," she exclaimed, as soon as she saw him, "I have got something to tell you! What do you think it is? Oh, you would never guess! I am going away on Monday!"

"Oh! no!" cried the boy, while a look of blank consternation came over his face.

"Indeed, I am! I don't want to go; but they say I must, David Lindsay."

"Oh! where are you going?" he asked, in a great trouble, that he never dreamed of trying to hide.

"To a boarding-school in Baltimore. Oh! I don't want to go, David Lindsay! But they say I must!" cried the child, almost in tears again.

The lad sighed, looked thoughtful, and then said:

"Yes; I know. Even grandmother has said often: 'Why don't they send that little lady to school? She ought to be at school.' So I suppose you must go, sure enough, and it is all right; but it is very har—hard!" said the boy, valiantly trying to suppress a sob, and succeeding in doing so.

"Yes, it is hard; but Uncle Marcel says that he and you must console each other; and he says he will lend you books and give you advice, and help you, if you wish, to improve your mind, David Lindsay. And here, come in here, and see what I have got for you! I told uncle I was going to give them to you, and he did not object. And old Laban brought them down here for me yesterday. Come and see," she said, as she led the way into the old boat-house and pointed to the trunk.

"Oh!" exclaimed the boy. "Books?"

"Yes! Drag the trunk out into the light where I can show it to you, David Lindsay."

The boy obeyed.

The girl then unlocked the trunk and gleefully displayed its contents, looking up into the boy's face with eyes dancing with the delight of delighting. Indeed, his eyes, radiant with rapture, responded fully.

"Oh! oh! what heaps of books and things!" he cried.

"They are all, all yours, David Lindsay!"

"Oh! oh! how generous you are! And—oh! how happy you must be!" he exclaimed, fairly catching his breath in ecstasy.

"Indeed I am very, very happy, David Lindsay!" she cried.

And so she was at that moment, while looking on her playmate's happiness, and forgetting that she had to leave him soon and go away from home.

And then both went to work and tumbled out all the slates, pencils, and pens, all the "Peter Parleys," and other attractive school books.

Finally, at the bottom of the trunk, lay two thick volumes, which little Glo' with some difficulty lifted out and took upon her lap, and playfully hid with her handkerchief, saying:

"And now, David Lindsay, here are two precious, precious treasures, too precious to be read very often!"

"What is it?" said the boy—"the Holy Bible in two volumes?"

"No," answered the girl, gravely and sweetly. "The Word of the Lord is the Book of books, and not to be talked of with others."

"Well, then, is it the Lives of the Saints?"

"No," she answered, smiling; "but you can never guess. This one in blue and gold is the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainment,' and this one in crimson, with the painted picture on the cover, is 'Fairy Tales.' Oh! they are just splendid, David Lindsay! I love them, and so will you; but you ought not to read them until you have done all your work and lessons for the day. Mamma never let me have the story-books until I had done my lessons," said the little girl, solemnly.

Meanwhile David was looking at the new books.

"I—I like these a heap better than I do the school ones," he said, as he turned over the pages.

"Oh, to be sure! So do I. But they are only holiday books, you know."

"Yes, these are only holidays, and these are working hours," said the boy, with a sigh and a smile, as he began to replace the volumes in the bottom of the trunk.

"I will put them all back again, if you want to go to work, David Lindsay," she said, as she joined him in the task that soon, at her word, he left her to complete. Then the sound of his hammer kept time to her hands as they quickly stowed away the treasures in the trunk.

Presently the boy stopped hammering and came to speak to her again.

"You are so good to me. You do so much for me, and I do not do any for you. I have not found out what to do for you! Oh, could you tell me what I could do for you?"

She opened her blue eyes wide with astonishment pure and simple.

"Why, why, you are always doing ever so much to please me!" she said.

"Now what? Do just tell me what?" he asked.

She paused in thought so long that he asked again, earnestly:

"What do I do to please you?"

"Oh, I don't know just what in particular, but you do everything every day, all the time! Why, David Lindsay, if you was to go to heaven and leave me behind, I should just cry my eyes out! Yes, I should just sit down on the old boat here and cry my eyes out!" And moved by the picture

her imagination had drawn, she might have given him a practical illustration, if he had not quickly responded:

"But I am not going to heaven to leave you behind! All we Lindsay fishermen live to be old men of eighty or ninety, if we don't get drowned, you know! Though indeed, for the matter of that, we mostly do get drowned," he added, in a lower tone.

But she heard him, and quickly cried:

"Oh! Don't you go and get drowned, please don't, David Lindsay!"

"Indeed, I don't mean to!" said the boy, as he went back to his hammering.

At that moment the colored girl, Lamia, appeared in the breach of the wall, calling for Miss Gloria.

The child stood up, and answered:

"Here I am. Who wants me?"

"Your aunt! Leastways, your uncle's aunt—Miss Aggravatin Discrepancy," said Lamia.

(That was what the negroes, with their usual blundering manner, made out of the lady's classic and elegant maiden name.)

"What does my aunt want with me, Lamia?" inquired the child, with a troubled look.

"To try on yer travelin' dress, which me an' Miss Aggravatin has been a rippin' up of one of her own old allypackers to make over for you, an' a cuttin' an' a bastin' of it all de whole mornin'. Come along, chile, 'cause it's got to be finished to-night, ef we sets up workin' on it till to-morrow mornin'."

"I must go, David Lindsay. I must go. But I will come back as soon as ever I can get away. And oh, won't you please try to get through your work so as to take time to row me over to Sandy Hill to take leave of dee-ar Granny Lindsay? Oh,

indeed I must go and take leave of dee-ar Granny Lindsay!" said little Glo', looking earnestly in the face of her playmate.

"I will work fast and get through all I have to do. I won't stop for dinner, but will work through the noon hour, and then I can get done by four o'clock and be ready for you," replied the boy.

Little Glo' ran home so as to get through the "trying on" as soon as possible.

She found her aunt too busy to question her as to where she had been.

Miss Agrippina did not detain her long, but as soon as the waist of the dress was fitted, and the length of the sleeves and skirt measured, she dismissed the child.

Full of a new idea, little Glo' ran to seek her uncle.

She found Colonel de Crespigny in the library, seated before the old organ, drawing weird music from its worn-out keys.

"Marcel, dee-ar, I have only got a day and a half now! Won't you please let David Lindsay off from his work, so he can take me in the row-boat over to bid good-by to Granny Lindsay? Oh, I must say good-by to dee-ar Granny Lindsay before I go," she pleaded, laying her tender cheek against his face.

"Yes, love," answered the gentle young uncle. "Yes, you shall have your little will while you stay here. Go and tell the lad to leave off work at once and row you over to the island."

She kissed him in warm gratitude and sped away to the landing, where she found her playmate still at work.

She told him her joyful news, exclaiming gleefully:

"We shall have a whole half-day holiday, for it is only just twelve o'clock, David Lindsay! We shall have, oh, such a happy, happy half day!"

The boy quickly stopped his work and got his boat ready.

Then the children lifted the trunk of books between them and placed it in the skiff. Lastly they entered and seated themselves, and David took up the oars and rowed for the isle.

They found the old dame busily engaged in preparing her frugal early dinner of tea and bread and butter, with fried fish, boiled eggs, and peaches and milk.

She gave the little lady a warm welcome and divested her of her hat and mantle. And while Gloria explained that her uncle had given David Lindsay a half holiday, the dame added two more cups and saucers and teaspoons and two more plates and pairs of knives and forks to the table and put a few more eggs on to boil.

"I am going to school on Monday, Granny Lindsay, and I have come to take leave of you," said little Glo', when she took the seat that David had placed for her.

"Have 'ee, darling? I'm glad to see 'ee, and main glad to hear 'ee's going to school," cordially replied the dame.

"I don't want to go, Granny Lindsay! I don't want to leave you all," sighed the child.

"But 'ee ought to, darling. 'Ee's a little lady, and 'ee ought to be trained up as such."

"But I don't want to be, Granny Lindsay! I want to stay home with dee-ar Marcel and you and David Lindsay!" sadly persisted the child.

"'Eee must subject 'eeself to 'ee pastors and masters, little lady. They do all for 'ee own good."

"Aunt Agrippina says that I am a countess, Granny Lindsay; but I know I am not. I am worse at counting than at anything else. I never could learn the multiplication table," said the child, with a look of perplexity and vexation.

"So much the more reason for 'ee to go to school, my little lady! Now sit 'ee up to table and have some dinner."

Little Glo' soon forgot her trouble in the society of Granny Lindsay and David.

She passed a "happy, happy half day," then, with many kisses, took a loving leave of her old friend, and returned home in charge of the fisher lad.

It was sunset when they landed on the promontory beach.

"To-morrow is Sunday. Uncle and aunt and I will go to church at La Compte's Landing. But after church we shall come directly home. Will you come in the afternoon to bid me a last good-by before I go? You know we are to start before day on Monday, so as to catch the St. Inigoes stage-coach," said little Glo', as she was about to take leave of her friend.

"Yes, indeed. I am going to church at St. Inigoes, but I will go to early mass, so as to be back in time to come here in the afternoon," replied the boy.

"So do! Good-night, David Lindsay!"

"Good-night!"

"God bless you, David Lindsay!"

"And you, too!"

She sped away towards the house, not singing

and dancing as had been her custom. Her little loving heart was too heavy with the thought of parting with her friends.

The next day she went with her uncle and aunt to morning service at La Compté's Landing, returned with them to a early dinner, and then went down to the beach to bid a last good-by to her friend and playmate.

He was waiting for her with a box of fine shells in his hand.

"These are some that grandfather brought home from the Indian Ocean. Granny has kept them for a long time; but she wants you to have them now," he said, rising and offering the box.

"Oh, how beautiful!" she exclaimed, sitting down with the box on her lap, and beginning to examine them. "So many different colors! so many different shapes and sizes! Not two alike!"

"People can make pretty boxes and vases out of them, granny says. Make the boxes and things out of pasteboard, you know, and stick the shells on them with glue," said the boy, as he stood looking down on her, pleased that she was pleased with his humble offering.

"Oh, but I think it would spoil the pretty shells to fix them on to anything! I like them to be free, so I can pour them from one hand to the other, and turn them over! Oh, David Lindsay, I am so glad to have them! And so glad you gave them to me, too!"

"Granny gave them to me to give to you."

"Well, it is all the same, David Lindsay. And I will take the pretty little things to school with me, and look at them every day, and keep them forever

and ever. Sit down by me and let us look at the little beauties together. You know that this is our last day."

The boy obeyed her.

She said it was their "last day;" and that day was drawing rapidly to a close. The children knew that they were going to part, but they scarcely knew yet what the parting was to be to them; they had had no experience in separation; and both wondered a little in secret why they felt no more pain at the immediate prospect of losing each other.

When the sun set, which was always the signal for their daily good-night, little Gloria shut up her box of shells and arose, saying:

"I must go now. Good-by, David Lindsay."

"Good-by."

"God bless you, David Lindsay!"

"And you too!"

Now, according to custom, she should have run home; but she lingered, loth to leave the spot.

"You know we are going to start long before daylight to-morrow morning," she said.

"I—know it!" he gasped with a great sob.

"Oh! David Lindsay, don't cry!" she wailed, with the tears rushing to her eyes.

"I'm not crying. It's a lump in my throat," said the poor boy.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! What shall I do? I don't want to go to school! I don't want to be a lady! I don't! I don't! And poor Marcel don't want me to go, neither!" wept the child.

"And no more do I!" cried the boy, struggling with the "lump in his throat."

"Don't cry, David Lindsay. Oh! please don't cry!"

"I'm not crying a bit! But I don't want you to go away," sobbed the lad.

"Nobody does, but Aunt Grip. It is all Aunt Grip! Oh! I wish she had never come near the place! We were all so happy until she came! And she says it is all for my own good. And I think that is too bad!"

Little Glo's last words awoke the better spirit of the boy.

He sobbed and sighed, and then set himself to comfort the little lady.

"She means it for your good. Even granny says you ought to go to school. And so I know it must be all right for you to go. And you will come back again, and be able to tell me lots of things."

"Oh, yes, indeed; I will come back for the Christmas holidays, you know. And oh! David Lindsay, every time I write to dee-ar Marcel I will send a message to you. And will you send one back to me, too?"

"If the master will let me."

"Why, of course he will let you! Dee-ar Marcel is too tender-hearted to refuse. Let me tell you something. Aunt Grip, ever since she has been here, has been trying to prevent me from coming out here and playing with you, and if it had not been for dee-ar Marcel, she would have prevented me; but Marcel would not let me be grieved that much."

The twilight was fading so fast that the child looked up to the sky in alarm, exclaiming:

"Oh! I must go! I must go! Good-by, dee-ar David Lindsay!"

"I must walk with you up to the house. It is too dark for you to go by yourself," said the boy, rising to accompany her.

He helped her over the rough stones of the broken sea wall, and then walked with her until they reached the porch and found Colonel de Crespigny and Miss Agrippina sitting out there to enjoy the delicious coolness of the August evening.

Then the boy paused and lifted his torn straw hat, and said:

"Good-night."

"Good-night. God bless you, dee-ar David Lindsay."

"And you too!"

So the children parted, to meet no more for years to come.

That night David Lindsay, being a boy, and therefore ashamed of his tears, cried "all alone by himself" in the little loft of his island cot.

That night, little Glo', being a girl, sobbed herself to sleep on the sympathetic bosom of her "dee-ar Marcel."

Long before light the next morning she took tearful leave of her uncle and her humble colored friends, and started in the custody of Miss Grip for the distant city where she was to spend her school days.

Before the end of the month she was duly entered as a resident pupil in the Academy of the Sacred Heart Convent. And Miss Agrippina de Crespigny returned to Promontory Hall to keep house for her nephew, well satisfied.

CHAPTER VIII

AFTER SEVEN YEARS

Out of the convent came the maid.

ROBERT BROWNING.

WE have lingered so long over the lovely childhood of little Glo' that we have no time to give to her school-days.

In entering her at the "Sacret Heart," Miss Agrippina had enrolled her as the "Countess Maria da Gloria de la Vera," and had provided her with as rich and costly an outfit as the rigid rules of the academy would permit. She had also furnished her with a plenty of pocket-money.

All this had given the simple-hearted, humble-minded little Glo' a grand rank among her untitled and less wealthy school-mates, who did all they possibly could do to transform her from a meek and lovely child to a proud and supercilious young lady.

Poor David Lindsay did not realize the loss of little Glo' until she had really gone. Then he "sorrowed without hope." It is true that he believed she would return at Christmas; but that was four long months off.

From the fourth day of her departure he began to watch for the return of old Laban from his Tuesday's and Friday's trips to St. Inigoes' Post-office, and on his appearance would call out:

"Any letters, Uncle Laban?"

The answers were always:

"Yes."

Then, after the decent delay of an hour, the poor boy would go up to the house and bashfully ask for the colonel, and when admitted to his presence stand respectfully, cap in hand, and inquire:

"If you please, sir, have you heard from——"

"Miss de la Vera?"

"Yes, sir, please."

"I have. She is well, and sends her kind remembrance to you," would Colonel de Crespigny reply.

(Now this was not at all what little Glo' sent. She sent her "love to dear David Lindsay." But Colonel de Crespigny exercised the guardian's prudence and privilege in translating the message sent through him.)

On hearing this, the boy would twist his little torn hat in his hand and say, timidly, hesitatingly:

"If you please, sir, when you write—would you please to say I thank her very much for thinking of me, and I send her my——"

"Respects."

"Yes, sir, please." (Now this was not at all what the poor boy meant to say; for he really wished to send his "best love to her.")

The parted children had no true interpreter, so no wonder a gulf opened and widened between them. But Marcel meant well; and David Lindsay was destined to have his turn, when, driven by the very outrage and stress of fate, the lovely heiress should lay her hand and fortune at the feet of the poor fisherman and implore him to take them up.

She did not come home for the happy Christmas holidays. Miss Agrippina represented to her brother that to bring the "Countess Maria" back

to the promontory would be to have all the trouble of parting to go through again; that therefore she had best be left to spend her holidays at the school where she was receiving her education.

The gentle colonel, through indolence and good nature, had fallen more and more under the dominion of his maiden aunt, and therefore consented to all her plans.

So little Glo' did not come home for her Christmas holidays. But her young uncle, who had not ceased to mourn in secret the absence of his pet, aroused himself from his lethargy, and went to the city, and took his niece from her prison, and spent the Christmas holidays with her at a fashionable hotel, taking her every evening to some place of refined amusement, and so devoting himself to her pleasure that the little rustic had reason to believe that, after all said, the city was the true Arcadia, and life, as "dee-ar Marcel" made it for her, a lovely fairy tale.

But in all the delights of her new vista of life, she did not yet forget her childhood's playmate, and amid her many questions about "them all at home," she did not fail to inquire about "dee-ar David Lindsay."

Her guardian replied that the boy was well and doing well, but had not come to borrow any books yet, and, perhaps, was not so much interested in improving his mind as she had supposed. Boys of his class were not likely to be so.

"But, Marcel, you must interest yourself in him, and not let his interest in his books flag. That was not what I expected of you, Marcel!" said his little monitress, reproachfully.

"I will do better when I return, my darling," replied her penitent.

"Mind you do, Marcel! He has no father, no guardian even, and who will look after my David Lindsay now I am away, if you do not?"

On the Monday after Twelfth Day he replaced the little student in her school and returned to his own dreary home and musty books.

He corresponded with her regularly through the winter and spring and the early summer; and noted the great improvement she was making.

There was one thing, however, that very much annoyed him in her letters. She always sent her "love to dear David Lindsay." But he took care to translate this into "kind remembrance," and to send back David's "respects." So the gulf widened and widened between the hearts of the children.

But David's time was yet to come.

Then, on the first of July, when the midsummer holidays were about to commence, he went to the city again, took his child out from her prison and carried her off to the Greenbriar White Sulphur Springs to give her a glimpse of the glorious mountain scenery, and an insight into the great world of society. Here the handsome young widower, the heroic young officer, with the laurels won in Mexico yet green in the memories of all, might have become the hero of the season; but nothing could win him away from his "child." He rode and drove with her through the wild and beautiful forest and mountain scenery. He read with her, sang duets with her, played ten-pins with her, and generally "made a fool of himself about her," as more than one aggravated matron with marriage-

able daughters declared. In September he took his child back to her school just a year older, and several years more experienced than she had been when she first entered the institution.

And now he had reason to congratulate himself on one thing. His ward's interest in the poor fisher-boy was evidently dying out, as he had first said it would. It was well enough that they should have played together as little children, and he had not therefore interfered to prevent them. He was too tender-hearted indeed to have given them so much pain. But now, at last, it was all ended, as it should be.

The first year was a type of all that followed while she remained at the "Sacred Heart." Every Christmas her young uncle would go and take her from the school and spend the holidays with her at a hotel, taking her to places of amusement suitable to her age; and at the end of the holidays replacing her at school and returning to his own home.

Every June he would go and take her for the midsummer vacation, and travel with her to some delightful summer resort among the mountains, or on the lake shores, returning her to her convent early in September, and then repairing to his own estate.

Sometimes his mother would write and ask him to bring his young ward and join her circle at Newport, or Niagara, or wherever they might have decided to spend their summer season.

But Colonel de Crespigny always found some good excuse for politely declining the invitation.

The very truth was that Marcel preferred to have his little Glo' all to himself during these long midsummer vacations.

Her vivid and deep delight in all the sublime and beautiful in nature and in art, rekindled his own smouldering enthusiasm and revived his fading youth.

Thus, through her, he enjoyed life anew. Now his time was divided like the Arctic year—into long darkness and long light. The time spent in his gloomy “penitentiary” on the promontory, was his Arctic night; the time passed in wandering and sight-seeing with his brilliant and ardent little traveling companion, was his Arctic day.

David Lindsay, chilled by the cold “remembrances,” that grew cold only in the refrigerator of Marcel’s translations, gradually ceased to inquire after Miss de la Vera, or send his “respects” to her.

And so the great gulf between the young souls seemed impassable, until one desperate leap in the dark cleared it.

Meanwhile the years rolled rapidly onward; his child was growing up, and he himself was growing—middle-aged.

The last time he took her out to spend her mid-summer vacation in traveling with him through a succession of beautiful summer resorts, he was thirty-five years old, with perhaps a dozen silver threads scattered over his fine head, but glistening with terrible conspicuousness amid the jetty blackness of his hair. She was just fifteen, tall and well-developed for her years, a radiant blonde, with a delicate Grecian profile, fair, clear transparent complexion, large, soft, dark blue eyes, veiled by dark eyelashes, and arched by dark eyebrows, and

with an aureole of lightly flowing, pale, golden-hued hair.

Marcel had not seen her since the preceding Christmas holidays, a period of nearly seven months, during which she had bloomed from the bud to the half-opened rose of womanhood.

He looked at her with surprised and delighted admiration. He said nothing on the subject, expressed no opinion, paid no compliment—only he refused more emphatically than ever his mother's invitation to bring his niece and join her party at Cacouna, Canada; and he resolved, more firmly than ever, to keep his lovely ward to himself.

Indeed, little Gloria desired nothing better. She loved her young uncle with all the devotion of a grateful, loyal, fervent heart, and was perfectly satisfied with his companionship, and only his, in all their summer wanderings and sojournings. She had no one else to love, poor child; her Aunt Agrippina she had only feared; and her childhood's playmate, David Lindsay, she only remembered tenderly, like one lost long ago, or like the dead. Marcel was all in all to her.

On this last occasion of which I speak, when Colonel de Crespigny, first seeing his young ward after a seven months' absence, was startled into surprise and admiration at the discovery that the pretty child had bloomed into the beautiful girl, he resolved that this should be her last year at school; that whether she should graduate or not graduate at the next annual commencement, he should withdraw her from the Sacred Heart Academy and bring her home "for good."

And then?

Marcel kept his future plans to himself.

CHAPTER IX

DUMB LOVE

His heart

Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
That ever shone upon him. He had looked
Upon it till it would not pass away,
But she in these fond feelings had no share;
To her he was a brother; 'twas a name
Her infant friendship had bestowed on him—
No more. BYRON.

THE years that had been spent by Gloria in study during the school terms, or in travel during her vacations, had been passed by David Lindsay on the little sandy island near the promontory.

This was his post of duty. Here his aged grandmother still lived without any companion or protector but himself.

He had steadily worked on the fishing landing, and he had employed his limited leisure in studying the elementary school books left him by his little playmate. He had thoroughly mastered them all, and now he longed for more liberty and better means of culture. But, true sentinel of Providence, he would not leave his sterile post of duty to attain them.

He had long ceased to ask after Gloria, chilled by the coldness with which his modest inquiries had been met by Colonel de Crespigny.

But he had never forgotten his childhood friend. He cherished the memory of the summers passed

in the society of his little playmate as the happiest portions of his poor life; and he worshiped her image, that in the light of that memory shone like the vision of an angel.

It was she who had found him on the beach toiling at his daily task, and had awakened his strong but dormant intelligence, and inspired him with the love and longing for knowledge.

He owed her this good, and was glad and grateful to owe it.

One morning in June, he arose early, as usual, and looking out from the little loft window of his bedroom in the island cot, he saw an unusual thing—a large schooner at the old promontory wharf, and men landing many boxes, barrels and kegs.

He had a job of work to do on the landing that day, so he dressed himself quickly, ate his breakfast in a hurry, got into his little old boat, and in a few moments rowed himself to the wharf.

“What is all this to-do?” he inquired of old Laban, who was busy receiving the goods.

“Come ashore and lend a hand here! Our young lady is coming home for good dis fall, and de house an’ groun’ is to be done up splendidly for her—an’ outen her money, too, for I know Marse Colonel hasn’t got none to spare!” answered the negro, as he let down a heavy box he had been helping to land.

David Lindsay secured his boat, sprang on the wharf, and gave his assistance to the men.

“So Miss de la Vera is really coming home?” he ventured to ask of Laban.

“Yes, on de first October! Ole Marse Colonel, he done gone to Baltimo’ to take her out’n school when de holidays come, an’ dey’s gwine for a trip to Lun-

nun or Europ', or some o' dem dere outlandish savidge parts o' de worl', an' dey's gwine to be gone all de summer; but dey's comin' back in de fall; dat is, ef so be de cannibals out in dem dere parts don't kill an' eat 'em fust! I fink it's downright dange'ous an' a temptin' o' Providence to leave one's 'spectable home an' go traipsin' off to dem dare igno'nt places—Lunnun an' Europ', and de like!" exclaimed Laban, in a tone of disgust and abhorrence.

"Miss de la Vera going to Europe!" said David Lindsay, to himself rather than to Laban.

"Hi! what I tell you, boy? Yes, gwine to Europ' long o' Marse Colonel Discrepancy! Gwine to see de savidges what lib across de big sea. Dare now, yer got it. I calls it a downright flyin' inter de face ob Providence. I does! What he fink, de Lord A'mighty put de big sea a rollin' 'tween we an' de cannibals for he to go an' sail across it on a big ship out'n contrariness?" said Laban.

"Is Miss Agrippina to be one of the party?" inquired the young man.

"No. Miss Aggravater is gwine to stay here to watch the workmen. Miss Aggravater gwine indeed! Catch her at it! Wish she was, dough! She might go, 'dout any danger. Cannibals wouldn't eat her, leastways not if dey wa'n't uncommon hungry."

David Lindsay said no more, but mused, as he helped to land the goods.

"Dere's an' arckman an' a decorum an' a skip-pin' gardener comin' down by de stage-coach to-morrow," explained Laban, meaning the architect, decorator and landscape gardener engaged by Colonel de Crespigny to transfigure the dreary

promontory and its prison-like buildings into a habitable home for the young heiress.

"And a precious deal ob money it is a gwine to cost, too, wherever it comes from, which I do 'spects it'll be out'n Miss Glo's own fortin', for Marse Colonel Discrepancy hasn't got too much to tro' away, dat I knows."

Laban was mistaken. He had been misled by appearances.

Marcel de Crespigny, leading his hermit life at the promontory, never receiving company and never going from home except when he went to take his ward from school, spent little money, had few wants, and lived like a very much poorer gentleman than he really was.

Hence, in the years he had spent at the promontory, the revenues from the fisheries, though not large, had been left to accumulate until they had reached a round sum, which he determined to invest in the restoration and improvement of Promontory Hall, to make his home as attractive as possible to his beautiful and beloved ward.

The goods brought to the wharf were all landed and stored away in the old dilapidated store-house, and then the schooner sailed away, and David Lindsay crossed the point to the fishing landing and set about his own especial work.

The next day the architect, decorator and landscape gardener came, and work began. The three principals went back and forth between the promontory and the city once or twice a month, but the workmen remained, and were quartered in the house, to the great discontent of Miss Agrippina, who vowed that she had never spent such a disagreeable summer in all the days of her life.

The works were all completed, however, by the middle of October; the gray stone walls of the old house were completely covered by a veneering of thin white slabs, that gave the building the appearance of a marble palace. French plate-glass windows opened upon piazzas with mosaic floors and Corinthian pillars. A mansard roof crowned the mansion. A fine garden, with a parterre of flowers, bloomed around it. Beyond that, the once barren fields were verdant with grass. The fishing landing on the point had been abolished as an ugly nuisance, and a pretty pier, with an equally pretty boat-house, had been erected on the place. The old sea-wall was repaired and a hedge of Osage orange trees was planted on its inner side.

Within the house every part was refurnished freshly and handsomely, if not very expensively.

When the finishing touch was put to the hanging of the mirrors and the drooping of the curtains, the decorator and the upholsterer, who were the last of the artisans to depart, came to take leave of Miss Agrippina de Crespigny.

"And I suppose you are very glad to see the last of us, ma'am," said Mr. Bracket, the great artist in "effects."

"I should rather see you here than your successors," replied Miss Agrippina, with even unusual grimness.

"Beg pardon?" said Bracket, interrogatively.

"I say I would rather see you here than your certain successors, the sheriff's officers, for I expect they will be the next strangers I shall be called upon to entertain! Such extravagance I never did see in all the days of my life! Well, I thank Provi-

dence my little portion is safe enough. Marcel can't make ducks and drakes out of that."

The two men bowed themselves out of Mrs. "Aggravater's" presence and went their way.

Colonel de Crespigny and Gloria were expected home in a few days. They had returned from their European tour in a steamer bound for Quebec, and were making a short tour through Canada, before completing their travels.

The first of October was a glorious autumn day. The sun was shining with dazzling splendor from a deep blue, cloudless sky; a soft, bright golden haze hung over the gorgeously colored woods and fields.

The new carriage and horses had been sent to St. Inigoes to meet the stage that was to bring the travelers that far on their journey home. It was from this circumstance that David Lindsay knew that Colonel de Crespigny and Gloria were expected to arrive that afternoon. He knew, besides, that they could only come at low tide, when the waves would have ebbed from the "neck" and left the road free. There would be low tide at half-past three o'clock.

Now the poor young fisherman was seized with an irresistible longing to look once more upon the face of her whom he had loved with the purest and most devoted affection, from the hour of their childhood when she found him on the beach and claimed him as her playmate until this hour, when, after a seven years' absence, she was returning home. If he should not succeed in getting a glimpse of her now, he feared that he might never see her again, for his occupation on the promontory was gone,

since the fishing-landing had been replaced by a pier and a boat-house.

He took his fishing-rod and went down on the neck at low tide, to wait for her carriage to pass.

He sat on a high rock, and baited his hook for "sheep's-head," which most did congregate about that spot. But before he could cast his line into the sea, the sound of wheels was heard approaching. He looked up and saw the promontory carriage coming slowly down the gradual descent leading on to the neck. He drew his broad-brimmed staw hat low over his eyes, and his heart almost stood still as he muttered within himself:

"Will she recognize 'David Lindsay?' I should know her anywhere, or after any length of time."

The carriage was coming. It was wide open, the top had been thrown quite down, both back and front, that the travelers might enjoy the fresh air and fine scenery of land and water on that delicious October afternoon.

On the coachman's box sat Laban, lazily holding the reins. On the front seat, with his back to the negro, sat Colonel de Crespigney, with his traveling cap on his knees before him, leaving his fine head, with his waving black hair and beard and his Roman features, bare.

Opposite him, on the back seat, sat a very restless young lady, with the face of an eager, vivacious child—a face with a delicate Grecian profile, a dainty, rosebud complexion, sparkling, glad blue eyes, and rippling, golden-hued hair.

She was constantly springing from side to side, gazing now on the right, now on the left, to catch glimpses of distant objects, once familiar, but long unseen.

"Oh, uncle!" she gladly exclaimed. "I can see the tall trees on this side of the dee-ar old house!"

"Wait until you see the house, my darling!" he replied, conscious of the surprise he should give her when he should show her the gray old "penitentiary" transfigured to a white palace.

A few more turns of the wheel and he exclaimed: "Look!"

But the effect was not what he desired and expected. She turned on him a surprised and distressed face, exclaiming:

"Oh, Marcel, what is that? Where is the dee-ar old home?"

"There it is, my precious child! That is the old home, renovated and adorned, and made worthy to receive its fair young mistress," replied the colonel, with evident self-complacency.

"Oh, Marcel, how could you? How could you do such a thing?" she cried, reproachfully—"how could you treat the dee-ar old home that way? It is not familiar; it is not the same at all! I do not know it at all! Oh, I am so disappointed and so sorry!"

"My dear, I thought to have given you a pleasant surprise. I thought only of your happiness," replied the poor colonel.

"And I expected to find the dee-ar old place just as I left it! Just as I left it! And, oh! look there!"

"What now, my dear?"

"Oh, Marcel! what have you done to the old seawall and the dee-ar old fishing landing, where I and David Lindsay used to play when we were children?"

"My dear, that fishing-landing was a nuisance to sight and smell. See what a pretty pier and boat-

house are built on its site," said Colonel de Crespigny.

"Oh, Marcel! how could you? How could you? You have spoiled everything! You have spoiled everything! You have killed the dee-ar old place! Instead of a living being in poor old clothes, it is a dead corpse in fine dress and flowers. Oh, I shall never see the dee-ar old house and the dee-ar old landing again! If I had known this I would never have come back! I might as well have stayed in Europe. Oh, I am so disappointed and so sorry I could break my heart!" cried the girl, with a piteous look of distress into the face of her guardian; but there she met an expression of so much misery that her tone changed instantly from reproaches to self-condemnation.

"Oh, what a selfish, ungrateful wretch I am, dee-ar Marcel! And such an idiotic little fool besides. You did it all to please me, and I ought to be glad and grateful, and so I shall be when I have sense enough to appreciate it all; dee-ar Marcel, forgive me," she pleaded, bending forward to lay her cheek against his whiskered face, as she had been used to do in her childhood.

"I am only so grieved, my child, to have given you pain instead of pleasure; but no doubt I am but a blundering brute!" sighed the colonel.

"Oh, no, no; you are the very best and dearest and most unselfish one in the world. I cannot remember the time when I did not love and honor you above all other ones on earth!"

"My little Glo', it was all the more reason I should have studied your nature and planned for your happiness more intelligently," sadly replied the colonel.

"Oh, Marcel! Don't say that, or I shall think you have not forgiven me. You have studied my happiness more than I deserved. You have done the very best for me always. In regard to these changes, they certainly do make a great improvement, which I shall be sure to appreciate and enjoy. It was only just at first, when I was looking to see the dee-ar old place in its old familiar face, that the change struck me as a disappointment, and I am such a fool for blurting out my very first thoughts and feelings!" said Gloria, caressing her uncle.

She was disappointed, poor girl; for to return some time to the old home and the old life had been the fond dream of the young, faithful heart in the long years of her exile and homesickness; and now to return and find all changed, even for the better, was a painful shock.

Colonel de Crespigny knew it now, and could not forgive himself for not anticipating such an effect.

"Do not look so grave, Marcel, or I shall think you never will forget my folly," she pleaded. "Listen, now, and let me tell you something, Marcel! Seeing the dee-ar old place all freshened up, and decorated and changed into something else, was just as if, when I was looking for you, and expecting to see you as you used to look—why—instead of my dee-ar, old, black-bearded darkey of an uncle, I had found a golden-haired, rosy-cheeked young fairy prince! There! That expresses my feelings in regard to seeing the dee-ar old home changed into something else!"

De Crespigny smiled; he felt pleased and flattered; he also understood her better and loved her more, as he remembered that she had always cherished a sweet, loyal love for old familiar friends and

places. He suddenly recalled the days when he had first known her as an infant of three years old, when some one had broken the head of her doll, and he himself had bought her a splendid young lady of waxen mould with rosy cheeks and flaxen hair, and dressed in silk attire, how she had hugged her poor old headless dolly to her faithful little heart and refused to part with it in favor of the radiant new one.

And later when she first arrived at the Promontory, bringing a little mongrel dog, who died soon after, and to comfort her he brought home a little white poodle, how sadly she turned away from the new claimant of her notice, murmuring, "Oh, uncle, I can't love another little dog so soon," though a few days afterwards she picked up the little poodle and petted him, muttering, "Poor Carlo, it wasn't your fault that poor little Flora died, was it?" and loved him ever afterwards.

About the same time, reading the story of "Beauty and the Beast," she had sighed, and said, "If I had been Beauty I would have loved the dear old Beast; I would not have wanted to have his head cut off to change him into anything else, not even a fairy prince!"

All these traits of her childhood recurred to the mind of De Crespigny, as he listened to the little penitent's frank confession.

"I understand, dear heart! I understand perfectly," he said, as he raised her hand and pressed it to his lips.

She smiled radiantly on him, and then turned and looked about her, as if in search of other changes.

Then her eyes fell upon the form of a young man seated on a rock, and apparently engaged in fishing.

She bent forward and suddenly exclaimed:

"Oh, Marcel, there is David Lindsay! I know it is David Lindsay! He has grown tall; of course, I expected to find him grown up, but he has the same face and eyes that I should know if I should meet him in Africa. Oh! I thank the Lord he is not changed into anything else! Oh, Marcel! I must speak to David Lindsay. Here, Laban, stop the horses! Stop them right here!"

The negro coachman touched his hat and drew up opposite the rock on which the young man sat, and within a few feet of it.

She leaned out, and called:

"David Lindsay! David Lindsay! Oh, David Lindsay, please come here!"

He looked up at the sound of her voice, and paled and shook with emotion as he drew in his fishing-line, laid it down beside him, arose, and approached the carriage.

"Oh, David Lindsay, how do you do? I am so overjoyed to see you once more! Why! don't you remember me—your old playmate of the fishing-landing?" she inquired, seeing that he hesitated to take the hand she had offered him.

He took the delicately gloved fingers then, however, and bowed over them.

"Why—don't you remember the old sea-wall, and the old broken boat, and the good times we used to have there, and the little dinners we used to cook on the beach, and the little schools we used to keep? Don't you remember, David Lindsay?" she gladly inquired, with a childlike eagerness, as she smiled upon him.

"Oh, yes, Miss, I remember well," he answered, in a low, subdued voice.

"Oh, I think that was the happiest time in my whole life, David Lindsay! Don't you?"

"It was the happiest time in mine, Miss," he replied, in the same subdued tone, as he kept his eyes fixed upon the ground, not trusting them to look at her again.

"And how is dear Granny Lindsay? Is she still at the cot on the isle? Is she as busy and active as ever?" inquired Gloria, with new interest in her tone.

"She is as well as she can be at seventy years of age, but more infirm than when you knew her last. She lives at the cot on the isle, and she is as busy, but not as active, as ever," he answered, slowly and gravely.

"Oh, what happy, happy days we used to have at her house, David Lindsay! Such happy, happy days! Do you remember them?"

Did he not remember them?

Ah, yes! but, with her bright face beaming down upon him, bringing the light of those days so vividly before him, with the memory of their frank, childish affection then, and the consciousness of the gulf that opened between them now, it had grown more and more difficult for him to answer her. Now he seemed tongue-tied.

"Do you think she will let me come and spend a day with her, just as I used to do? Oh, how I should like to do so! It would be so like old times! Would she let me, David Lindsay?"

"Indeed, she would be very happy to do so," replied the young man, partly recovering his voice.

"Well, then, will you ask her if I may come to-

morrow? And will you row me over, as you used to do, David Lindsay?"

"I shall be too happy to do so, Miss de la Vera."

"Ah, how glad I shall be to see dee-ar Granny Lindsay, and revive one of those old-time, happy, happy days!" exclaimed Gloria.

"My dear," said Colonel de Crespigny, gravely, "the tide is coming in, and we are not more than half-way across. It is not safe to remain here a moment longer. We can scarcely cross before the road will be six feet under water!"

"And David Lindsay has to walk! He will never be able to cross in safety! And it is I who have kept him loitering here! Oh, I am so sorry! But you must not walk, indeed, David Lindsay! Get in here and sit beside me, if you please. Yes, but I insist upon it now!" she added, seeing that he did not comply with her request.

"You had better do so, Lindsay," coldly added Colonel de Crespigny, as he left his own seat and sat down beside Gloria, leaving the front cushion free for the young man.

"I thank you very much, Miss de la Vera, and you also, sir; but I can easily walk the way before the road will be covered," replied young Lindsay, as he bowed and retreated from the carriage.

"'A willful man must have his way,'" said the colonel.

"Oh, Marcel, you did not invite him half cordially enough!" cried Gloria. "And suppose he was to be overtaken by the tide and swept away!"

"No danger. Look there," said the colonel, pointing to the road before the carriage, down which David Lindsay, with his fishing tackle in his hand, was striding at a good rate.

The horses were now started and driven off at a speed. They passed the young man, who raised his hat as they whirled out of sight.

"Marcel, I will never forgive you if David Lindsay is drowned!" exclaimed Gloria.

"No danger, Miss!" volunteered old Laban from the box. "There is a plenty o' time, an' he's a famous hand at walking."

"Foot at walking, you mean, old man, don't you?" inquired Colonel de Crespigny.

"I don't see how you can jest, Marcel, when any fellow-creature, not to say David Lindsay, is in peril," exclaimed Gloria, reproachfully.

"Do you, then, suppose, my dear, that I am capable of jesting with the peril of any fellow-creature? Is not my jesting proof enough that there is no peril?" inquired the colonel, deprecatingly.

She did not answer him. She had twisted her head quite around to look back on the figure of the young man, who was striding fast behind the carriage.

And during the remainder of their rapid drive she continued from time to time to look back at the striding figure, until at length they had crossed the long stretch of road and reached the higher and broader portion of the promontory that was so soon to be turned by the high tide into an island.

Then for the last time she looked and saw that though the lowest part of the isthmus was covered with the waves, yet as David Lindsay was already ascending the rise towards the promontory, he was out of danger.

It was nearly dark when they reached the house, which was already lighted up for the reception of the travelers.

Miss Agrippina de Crespigney, attended by Sophia and Lamia, stood in the hall to welcome them home.

She took Gloria by the waist, kissed her on both cheeks and said:

"You are looking very well, my dear. How much you have grown!"

And then Gloria returned her caresses and her compliments, saying:

"You are looking finely, aunt. You are not changed at all. I think no one is changed except David Lindsay and myself. I think people must grow up and stay so until they become very old."

But quick Miss Grip had already turned to her nephew to shake hands with him, and left Gloria free to receive the welcome of her colored friends.

"How you has growed! My patience alibe, how you has growed, honey!" was the greeting of 'Phia.

"'Deed I is mighty proud to see you, Miss Glo', 'deed is I!" was the cordial exclamation of Lamia.

"You had better prove your feelings in a more practical manner by showing your mistress up to her room," said prompt Miss Grip.

"Come on, Miss Glo'!" said the unceremonious girl.

"Yes, indeed, Lamia, I do wish to lay off my wraps. I have been wearing them so long," responded the young lady, as she followed her maid up the broad staircase to the large southeast room overlooking the sea, which had been hers in her childhood.

"Ain't it just lovely, Miss Glo'?" triumphantly exclaimed the girl, as she threw open the door and displayed the renovated and decorated chamber, blooming like a rose in its pink silk and white lace

curtains, its pink velvet and white satin chairs, and its pink and white walls and carpet.

"Isn't it just lovely, now, Miss Glo'?" repeated the pleased maid.

"Oh, dear, yes, I suppose it is; but it isn't like my dee-ar old room at all! Not even the fire-place!" she sighed, as she turned to the glowing coals on a polished steel grate that had replaced the blazing hickory logs of the old open chimney that was so familiar to her childhood.

"Why, you don't like it, Miss Glo'!" exclaimed the girl in surprise and disappointment.

"Oh, yes, I do; but—it is not like home at all! Nothing is like home, and I feel as if I had come into a strange house, and should never reach home again!" sighed the homesick child, as she laid her hat on the pretty counterpane of white crochet over pink silk.

"And we took such pains to please you!" said the maid, sorrowfully.

"Poor Lamia! Well, I am pleased, only I would like to have seen my old room once more just as it was. Come now and help me to dress. My boxes have arrived, I suppose. They were sent by express to Leonardtown last week."

"Oh, yes, Miss, soon as ebber de letter an' de keys come by mail, us sent daddy wid de wagon to Lennuntown to fetch de boxes home, which dey rove safe an' soun', an' I unpacked dem an' put all de fings 'way in de boorers an' ward'obes."

"That was right. Just give me the blue cashmere suit and the lace that is with it."

The girl obeyed, and the young lady soon completed her toilet and went down stairs to join her aunt and uncle in the drawing-room.

Dinner was soon afterward served.

When that was over, the small party returned to the drawing-room, where Colonel de Crespigny wished to show his niece the new grand piano that he had selected for her. Here was also a music-stand supplied with the works of the great masters.

He opened the piano and led her to it.

She seated herself and touched the keys, and found the instrument to be one of very superior tone.

She spent the remainder of the evening in playing and singing the favorite airs and songs of her uncle. Her voice was a pure, clear soprano, and her soul was always in her song. Hence, though she might never have achieved a grand success as a public singer, she was very effective as a parlor performer.

At the close of this musical entertainment the small party separated and retired to bed.

And so ended the day of Gloria's return home.

CHAPTER X

MYSTERIOUS DANGER

Something of a cold mistrust,
Wonderful, and most unjust,
Something of a surly fear
Fills my soul when he is near.

CAROLINE NORTON.

GLORIA did not carry out her intention of going to Sandy Isle on the next day to see her old friend, Granny Lindsay.

The weather had changed in the night, and a week of steady rain set in.

The small family were confined to the house, and had to find what amusement they could within doors.

Colonel de Crespigny found occupation and entertainment enough in unpacking his books from the boxes in which they had been carefully put away to keep them safe from the workmen who were in the house, engaged in the work of restoration, during his absence in Europe with his ward.

Gloria found interesting employment in turning over and inspecting the beautiful wardrobe she had brought over from London and Paris; and afterwards in rambling through all the rooms of the rejuvenated old house, to which she could scarcely become reconciled.

"Oh, it is all very fine, I dare say, and it was very good of the colonel, and I ought to admire it very much, but it reminds me of the melancholy old ladies I have seen at public places, all painted up with rouge and pearl powder. The old house was more respectable and even more beautiful and artistic in its old aspect."

Miss de Crespigny engaged herself in preparations for her departure, for she was going South to spend the winter with her brother and sister-in-law, and had delayed her departure only to receive Colonel de Crespigny and Gloria on their return to Promontory Hall.

By the time that the rainy season came to an end and the sun of the Indian summer shone out again, Colonel de Crespigny's books were all unpacked, catalogued, and restored to their niches in the newly furnished library; Miss de la Vera's personal ei-

fects were inspected and arranged, and Miss de Crespigny's preparations for her departure were complete.

"I have reconstructed your household government, and trained your servants so well in the seven years that I have passed in this house, Marcel, that now I think affairs will run quite smoothly in the present groove with only the nominal mistress of the house that the little countess will make. I think, however, that you should take your niece to Washington in December, and spend the fashionable season there with her, where she may have some opportunity of marriage, suitable to her rank and wealth," said Miss de Crespigny to the colonel in a *tête-à-tête* she held with him on the day before she was to leave the promontory.

"Gloria is but sixteen. There is time enough five years hence to think of marrying her off," replied Colonel de Crespigny, wincing, for he was less inclined than ever to display his treasure to the world; more disposed than before to keep her all to himself.

Late in the day, Miss de Crespigny said to the young lady:

"You must make your uncle take you to Washington for the season, my dear. It is not right that you should be buried in your youth in this remote and solitary home. You are the Countess de la Vera, and should be brought in society suited to your rank. My sister-in-law, Madame de Crespigny, will be in Washington this winter. She has no unmarried daughters of her own, and I am sure she would feel honored to chaperone the Countess Gloria. Make your uncle take you to Washington this winter, my dear."

"Oh, Aunt Agrippina, I thank you for your kindness in thinking about me so much, and I assure you that Marcel would do anything to please me without being made to do it; but really I do want to stay home and be quiet this winter. Ever since I left school—the first of July—I have been going to places all the time. I am so tired of going to so many places and seeing so many things. I don't want to go away again for ever so long. I want to stay here and see all my dee-ar old friends and live the dee-ar old times over again," pleaded Gloria.

"My child, you can never live the old times over again any more than you can go back to your babyhood and live that over again. And as for old friends, Gloria, you have none."

"Oh, yes! there is dee-ar Granny Lindsay and David Lindsay!"

"Not the right sort of friends for the Countess de la Vera. But there is all the more reason why you should go to Washington. I will speak to my nephew again on the subject," said Miss de Crespigny.

And she did speak to the colonel that same afternoon, but without effect.

No doubt if she had stayed longer she might have gained her point.

"For if a man talk a very long time," &c.

I have quoted that piece of wisdom already. Miss de Crespigny had not "a very long time" to "talk." She was to leave Promontory Hall the next morning.

Her last "official" act that night was to call the three servants into the dining-room and give them

a final lecture on their duties to themselves, to each other, and to their master and mistress.

"And let me impress this fact upon you," she said, gravely; "the young lady of this house is not a Marylander. She is not even an American. She is a Portuguese West Indian, and a countess by birth and inheritance. You are not to address her, or speak of her, as Miss Glo'. I won't have it! You are to speak of her as the Countess Gloria. Remember that!"

Then, after some other instructive discourses, the old lady distributed some presents among them and dismissed the party.

The next morning Miss de Crespigney left Promontory Hall in the old family traveling carriage, driven by Laban as far as St. Inigoes, where she was to meet the stage-coach that was to take her to Baltimore.

Her directions to the servants in regard to Miss de la Vera's Portuguese birth and rank were remembered with simple indignation by the two women, 'Phia and Lamia, who did not know a Portuguese from a portemonnaie, or a countess from a counterpane.

"Call our Miss Glo' countess, indeed! Sha'n't do no sich fing! 'Deed, I fink it would be downright undespectful to call our young lady countess, as nebber had the trouble ob countin' de chickens, or de ducks, or anyfing on de place, all her blessed life," exclaimed 'Phia, wrathfully beating out her excitement on the feather pillow of the bed she was helping her daughter to make up.

"What Miss Aggravater means by it, anyways?" scornfully inquired Lamia.

"Contrariness, nuffin' else!" replied 'Phia, giving the pillow a portentous whack with her fists.

And from that time they continued to call the golden-haired girl Miss Glo', and nothing else.

Meanwhile Gloria and her uncle lived together day after day, and week after week, and never seemed to tire of each other, or to desire any other society.

She had none of the cares that might have fallen on her as the young mistress of the house.

'Phia had been trained by Miss "Aggravater" into a model manager, and was quite capable of assuming all the responsibility and discharging all the duties of a good housekeeper.

Thus the young lady, while holding all the authority of the mistress, enjoyed all the freedom of a guest.

Every morning after breakfast she brought her little fancy work-basket down into the library, and sat in a low chair by the table where her uncle was reading or writing.

She sat very quietly working, as she used in her childhood to sit playing. She never disturbed him by a word or a movement, being contented only to remain near him.

Yet whatever might be his occupation, of reading or of writing, he was sure to share it with her. It was in this way: If he happened to be engaged with a book, he would read choice selections from his author, and then draw her thoughts forth in praise or censure of the subject, or its treatment. If he were engaged with his pen, he would read to her what he had written, and invite her to suggest any alteration or improvement that might occur to her mind.

And he was often amused and sometimes startled by the brightness and originality of her thoughts and criticisms.

Sometimes he would pause in his employment and sit and silently watch her at her pretty work of silk embroidery. At such times, she worked more diligently than at others, keeping her eyes fixed upon her needle, and never daring to raise them to his face.

If you had asked her—why was this? she could not have told you. She did not know herself. She only knew, or rather felt, that, at such moments, to meet Marcel's eyes made her own eyes sink to the floor, and her cheeks to burn with confusion, indignation and misery.

She hated herself for this unkind emotion, which she could neither comprehend nor conquer.

"Why," she asked of her heart in vain—"why should I feel so wounded, insulted and offended at the steady gaze of dee-ar Marcel, who loves me so truly, and whom I love and honor more than any other one in the whole world?"

She could not answer her own question. She only felt that she hated herself for entertaining such feelings, and sometimes even hated her dee-ar Marcel for inspiring them.

From some strange intuition she had ceased to call him "Marcel, dee-ar," with tender slowness drawing out the word into two syllables, and dwelling with pathetic fondness on the first. She called him "uncle, dear," with respectful brevity, and nothing more.

On one occasion, while she was sitting at his feet in the library, engaged with her flower embroidery in colored silks, and not daring to raise her eyes,

because her burning cheeks and shrinking heart assured her that he had ceased reading and was gazing steadily upon her, he said, with a touching sadness:

"I fear that you are often dull in this lonely house, dear child."

"Oh, no, uncle, never dull," she answered, without raising her eyes.

"And never weary of a tiresome bookworm like me?"

"Never, uncle, dear," she answered, kindly, touched by the pathos of his tone, but half afraid of the pity that she felt for him, lest it should lead her into some vague, ill-understood wrong or woe.

"Gloria," he said, in a strangely earnest tone.

"Well, uncle?" she breathed, in fear of—she knew not what.

"Look at me, my darling."

She raised her eyes to his face, but when she met his glance she dropped them immediately.

"Gloria!"

"What is it, uncle, dear?"

"I wish you would not call me 'uncle.' I am not your uncle, child. Do you not know it?"

She did not speak or look up, but worked steadily on her embroidery, feeling that the atmosphere oppressed her so that she could scarcely breathe.

"Do you not know that I am not your uncle, Gloria? Do you not know that I am not the least kin to you? Answer me, my darling."

"Yes, I know it," said the perplexed girl, scarcely above her breath.

"Then you do not love me the less for not being your own uncle?"

"Oh, no," breathed the girl.

"While I—— Ah! my child, I thank Heaven every day of my life that I am no blood relation of yours," he added earnestly.

She heard him with a shudder, but made no reply.

"You must not call me uncle any longer, my darling. You must call me 'Marcel,' as you used to do. Do you hear me, Gloria? Will you call me 'Marcel,' as of old?"

She felt herself almost suffocating under the passion of his gaze, but she forced herself to answer, though in the lowest tone:

"I cannot do so now."

"But why? You used to do so, my dearest. You used to call me nothing but Marcel."

"That was—when I was a baby—or a child. I called you—what I heard others call you—as children will. I knew no better then. I know better now," she answered, with a fruitless attempt to speak firmly; for her voice sank and almost expired, as she wished herself a thousand miles from her present seat, yet felt that she had no power to flee.

"But, my dear, you cannot go on calling me uncle, for I am not your uncle," he answered, really pleased and flattered by the distress that he fatally misunderstood, because, in fact, it resembled the sweet confusion of the girls who had been "in love" with him in his earlier youth. "No, Gloria, you must not call me uncle," he repeated.

"Then I must call you Colonel de Crespigney," she replied, without raising her oppressed eyes.

"Never! that would be almost as bad as the other. No, you must call me Marcel, as you used to do.

How sweetly the syllables fell, bird-like, bell-like, flute-like, from your lips, my darling."

She made no answer, but wished she had the power to rise and go away.

"Gloria," he said, dropping his voice to the lowest tone—"Gloria, I told you just now that I thanked Heaven there was no blood relationship between you and me! Can you divine, my love, why I do so thank Heaven that we are of no kin?"

She trembled, but could not speak or move.

"Can you not, my child? Ah! you do! you do!" he sighed, seizing both her hands and trying to draw her towards him.

The touch gave her the power she needed.

"No! I don't! I don't know what you mean!" she suddenly cried, snatching her hands from his, starting up and rushing out of the room. Nor did she stop until she had gained the solitude of her own chamber, where she banged to and locked the door, and then sank half dead upon her sofa.

She really did not know, and did not want to know, what her guardian meant by his strange speech any more than by his strange manner. "She understood a horror in his words, but not his words." She felt a sudden abhorrence of his person that sent her flying from his presence.

And now, in the seclusion of her own room, her overwrought feelings broke forth in a flood of tears.

These relieved her, and then she began to ask herself the cause of all this excessive emotion. She could discover no reasonable cause. Her guardian had been as kind, or even kinder, than usual. He had only looked at her very intently, and asked her if she knew why he thanked Heaven that there was

no blood relationship between them; and he had taken her hand in his to draw her nearer to him.

Now, what was there in all this to turn her sick even to faintness? To fill her with terror and disgust? To make her fling his hands off and rush from the room?

She could not tell. She said to herself that she had behaved very rudely, harshly, unkindly! Whatever her guardian had meant by his strange behavior, he had meant no evil. How could he mean evil? No, he had meant none; of that she felt quite sure all the time. And yet she had rushed rudely away from him, and hurt him who had never meant anything other than good to her, and she felt very sorry for her own conduct.

"I am too impulsive. Uncle always told me I was too impulsive. Even the mother-superior of the Sacred Heart Convent school used to tell me that unless I watched and prayed I would some day commit some fatal error on an impulse that might ruin my life. Yes, I am too impulsive. I must learn self-control, and not worry others because I cannot understand them. I have hurt my good uncle, who means me nothing but good, and I must try to make amends to him," she said to herself.

But—she called him her "good uncle," and not her "dee-ar Marcel," and even in her tender compunction she felt a latent misgiving, a vague fear of some wrong or woe into which this sweet penitence might lead her.

"If I only had a mother," she sighed.

Meanwhile, in the library, Marcel de Crespigny held an interview with himself full of bitter self-reproach and lamentations.

"I have alarmed and repelled her by too sudden an approach. And yet I thought that six months of the close companionship and easy intercourse of travel, together with the affection and confidence she has always shown to me, had prepared the way to a nearer and dearer union! But I have been too impatient, too hasty, too importunate. I should have approached her gradually, gently. I should have remembered that she is not quite like other girls. She is very delicate, dainty, refined, sensitive—yea, a very mimosa, that shrinks and trembles at a rude breath or touch. I must be patient, very patient for weeks, for months, if I hope to win her hand."

CHAPTER XI

TERROR

"No more! I'll hear no more! Begone and leave me!"

"Not hear me? By my sufferings but you shall!"

OTWAY.

GLORIA remained in her own room until the dinner-bell rang.

Then she arose, hastily arranged her dress, glanced into the mirror to be sure that all traces of the morning's stormy emotion had passed away from her face at least, however it might still trouble her spirit or influence her conduct, and finally she went down stairs and into the dining-room.

There she found Colonel de Crespigny, looking ever paler than usual. He fixed his large, dark, dreamy eyes upon her, not offensively now, but

with a mournfully appealing gaze, that went to her heart, as he gently took her hand and murmured :

"I am very unhappy, Gloria. I frightened you this morning, dear. I do not know how I did it. I did not mean to do it ; and I beg your pardon, my child."

"Oh, uncle, dear, do not say that. It was I, myself, who was so rude and absurd. I do not know why I was so. I never meant to be. I hope you will forgive me," she answered, speaking from the pity of her heart.

Then with an instantaneous reaction of fear that fell like a blow upon her consciousness, she regretted her tenderness, and wished that she had not spoken so warmly.

He—ah ! he only heard her gracious words, only saw her sweet smile ; he could not perceive the changing, shrinking spirit. He beamed on her with a look that made her shiver, as he drew her hand within his arm and led her to the table with old-time princely courtesies, and then took his own seat.

Laban had just placed the soup on the table, and now stood behind his master's chair to wait.

While the servant remained present there was no more conversation between the guardian and the ward than the etiquette of the dinner hour required.

But when the man had removed the cloth and placed the fruits, cake and coffee on the table and had left the room, and the uncle and niece were alone together, though the feelings of each towards the other were of the kindest nature, yet there fell a certain painful constraint on their intercourse, such as had never existed in all their past lives, but

such as could never quite pass away in all their future days.

How was this?

For weeks Marcel de Crespigney had rendered his youthful ward very uneasy by his manner toward her. On that morning he had frightened her from her self-possession, and she had rushed from him in terror. Later and cooler reflection had convinced her that she had really no actual cause for offence or fear. And when he had made his humble apology, her heart had been so touched that she had more than forgiven him, she had spoken tenderly to him, and she had taken all the blame upon herself. Then, with strange misgivings of wrong and woe, she had regretted her graciousness, and when he beamed on her with a look of love and joy, she had shrunk up into reserve and cautiousness.

She became possessed of that

“Surly fear and cold disgust,
Wonderful and most unjust,”

which she could neither comprehend nor conquer; for which she often blamed herself, but which now held her tongue-tied and downcast in the presence of her guardian.

He, on his own part, quick to perceive her state, felt that he had again lost her confidence and filled her with fear; and he also grew reticent in looks and speech, and consequently depressed and mournful.

She gave him a cup of coffee, without a word.

He took it with a silent bow.

Both were relieved when, at the end of the ceremony, they were free to leave the dining-room.

She was the first to rise from the table. He followed her, opened the door, and held it until she had passed out.

In the hall Gloria paused with indecision as to her next step.

She had always been accustomed, since her return home, to go into the drawing-room, sit down at the grand piano and play some of Marcel de Crespigny's favorite music, and, later in the evening, just before retiring, to sing some of his best-loved songs.

Now she stood for a moment in doubt. Her vague uneasiness made her wish for the privacy and safety of her own chamber. Her benevolence made her unwilling to wound her guardian's feelings by any such avoidance of his company.

Only for a moment she hesitated, and then she led the way to the drawing-room, followed by Colonel de Crespigny.

She played and sang for him all the evening, as usual, and on bidding him good-night, gave him her hand to kiss, as before.

He merely touched it with his lips, and dropped it without a word.

Gloria went to her room and retired to bed; but it was long before she could compose herself to sleep, and when she did so her slumbers were troubled with evil dreams that kept her tossing and starting all night.

Only towards morning she slept soundly—so soundly that she was first awakened by the ringing of the breakfast-bell.

She arose in haste and dressed herself, and went down to the breakfast-room, where she found her guardian pacing to and fro, waiting for her.

"Good-morning, uncle, dear," she said, holding out her hand.

"'Uncle,' and always 'uncle,'" he sighed, in a tone of reproach, as he held her hand and sought to meet her eyes. "I am not your uncle. I do not like the name. I have told you so, my dear. And yet it is 'uncle,' and always 'uncle.'"

"Yes, it is, and must be 'uncle,' and always 'uncle,' and nothing but 'uncle,' from me to you, uncle, dear," she answered, persistently, though in a trembling tone, keeping her eyes fixed upon the floor lest they should encounter his gaze—for the gaze of those large, dark, dreamy, mournful orbs was beginning to have a terror and fascination of the serpent or the devil for her.

"You have not forgiven me yet, Gloria," he answered.

"Indeed I have," she replied, moving quickly to her place at the head of the table and touching the call-bell to bring in Laban with the coffee pot.

Breakfast passed off very much as the dinner of the preceding day had done, in mutual constraint.

When it was over, and both left the table, Colonel de Crespigny passed into the library, where he usually spent his mornings.

It had been Gloria's unvarying custom to follow him thither with her needlework and sit sewing in her little low chair, while he read or wrote at the table.

Now, however, she could not bear to re-enter the place of the previous day's terror. She took her garden hat and shawl from the hall rack and put them on.

"Where are you going, my dear?" inquired the colonel.

"For a little, solitary walk. I wish to be alone, and I need more air and exercise than I can get here. The day is so beautiful, too, that I must improve it. There are so few fine days left at this season of the year," she answered, as she drew on her gloves.

The colonel hesitated. He would rather have joined her; but her emphatic declaration that she wished a solitary walk, forbade him to force his unwelcome company upon her.

"Good-morning, uncle, dear; I shall return before lunch," she said, as she left the house.

He watched her until she closed the front door behind her, and then he sighed and turned sadly to his study and shut himself in.

Gloria stood on the new portico above the new terrace and looked all over the renovated domain. Terrace below terrace, the ground fell from the house down to the park wall. Below that, encircling and enclosing the round of the end, arose the high, strong, gray sea-wall, shutting out the sight of the beach. It was so solid that the only egress in that direction was through the little, substantial stone boat-house that was built against it, and whose strong, iron-bound oak doors, both landward and seaward, were kept locked.

The only means of leaving the promontory was by water through the boat-house when the doors happened to be unlocked, or by land across the Rogue's Neck when the tide was low.

"Really, now that the sea-wall is rebuilt the place is more like a penitentiary than ever," said Gloria to herself, as she walked away from the house.

She wanted to get off the promontory, to take a longer walk than she could get within its limits, so

she resolved to leave it by way of Rogue's Neck and indulge in a ramble through the wintry woods on the main.

It was a really splendid day within about a week of the Christmas holidays. No snow had fallen yet, nor were the trees of that latitude stripped of the glorious autumnal regalia. Enough bright leaves had fallen to carpet the ground with a carpet more brilliant than the looms of Axminster or Brussels ever wove; but not enough to be missed from the royal robes of the forest. The glorious beauty of the autumn woods seen across the water, so attracted the young girl that she walked swiftly on towards Rogue's Neck, never thinking whether it were high or low tide, only anxious to cross over and plunge into the depths of the grand forest. But when she came in sight of the Neck she found, to her disappointment, that the waves were dashing wildly over the whole length and breadth of it. It was high tide, and it would be six hours before the road would be passable again.

She turned away and—met David, the young fisherman, face to face!

Her disappointment was forgotten in an instant. Her eyes danced with joy. Here was some one, at least, of whom she was not afraid—in whom she could perfectly confide—who would never terrify, humiliate, or in any way wound her.

"Oh! David Lindsay, I am so glad to see you!" she said, frankly, holding out her hand to him.

He took it, bowed, and dropped it, all in silence.

"Oh! David Lindsay, why haven't you come to see your old playmate all this time? I have been home nearly three months, and you have not been to see me once, not once. You promised to come

the day after my arrival to take me to see your grandmother. Well, I know it rained that day, and for a week afterwards, and you didn't come because you knew I could not go out in such weather. But there has been very fine weather since then, yet you have never come to see your old playmate, never once—and such friends as we used to be! I take it very unkind of you, David Lindsay, that I do!" she said, with an air of injury that she really felt.

"Miss de la Vera," gravely replied the young man, as soon as the cessation of her scolding little tongue gave him the chance, "I have been to see you many times within the last three months, but you have always been denied to me."

"Eh!" exclaimed Gloria, opening her eyes wide with incredulous astonishment.

"I beg to repeat that I have come many times to pay my respects, but have always been denied the privilege."

"Now, who has dared to do that? Who has dared to profane my freedom in that manner? David Lindsay, I never knew of your coming or I would have seen you. Now tell me all about it," she exclaimed, her eyes sparkling, and her cheeks burning with the sense of wrong and outrage, as she turned about to continue her walk. He also turned and went beside her, as he answered:

"Miss de la Vera, the morning after your arrival home I came up to the hall, not by appointment, not to take you to Sandy Isle, for I knew you could not go in such a storm, but to ask you to fix another day when I might have the honor of serving you. I was met by Colonel de Crespigny, to whom I made known my errand. He told me that the weather would not permit Miss de la Vera to go out

that day, nor was it likely that it would be any more favorable for a week to come, and when, in fact, it should be so, and when his ward should desire to make a visit, he would himself escort her. His manner told me that my visit was uncalled for, unwelcome, and improper. I bowed very low, and left him."

"He never told me that you had been here. I blamed you for neglect. And it is all his fault. Oh! I am glad I met you, David Lindsay! Tell me more! You came again?"

"Yes, many times, Miss de la Vera, but I was always met by Colonel de Crespigny, who told me that you were occupied and could not see me."

"But in the first place, you must have seen one of the servants. Did you then ask for me, or for the colonel?"

"For you, Miss de la Vera. I always asked the servant I happened to see to take my respectful message to yourself, that I waited on you, according to your orders. And always Colonel de Crespigny came out and told me that you were engaged, or words to the same effect, and so dismissed me, showing by his manner that he considered my call impertinent. Yet, as he did not actually forbid me to come again, and as I considered that I was acting under your orders, I continued to come once or twice a week. I was on my way to the house when we met."

"Oh!" burst forth Gloria, with one of her irrepressible impulses. "I think it was most outrageous for any one to interfere with my liberty of action in that way! I will never submit to such control! Never! It was the farthest thing from my dear father's thoughts that my will should be so ham-

pered! He made every provision for my freedom and happiness!"

"Miss de la Vera," said the young man, speaking conscientiously and generously, "I think your guardian acted for the best. He had the right to deny any visitor to you whom he disapproved of for any reason. My grandmother said so when I told her of my failure. And she always said, besides, that Colonel de Crespigny was the most indulgent guardian that she ever heard of, and that you had more freedom, even when a child, than any young lady she ever knew, having your own way in almost everything. And you know my old grandmother is a wise and good woman."

"Yes, I know she is, and I honor her, and I love her dearly, and that is the reason why I wanted so much to go to see her, and asked you to come and row me over in the boat. And to think you came so often and I did not know it. Oh-h!"

"Perhaps I ought not to have persisted in coming. Perhaps I ought to have taken a hint from the colonel's manner, and stayed away after my first repulse," said the young fisherman.

"No, you ought not, David Lindsay. You ought to have minded me rather than him!" said the little autocrat.

"Then I ought not to have told you of my repeated rebuffs to stir up angry feelings in your bosom."

"Now, how could you help it with such a catechiser as I am? You could not tell a falsehood by saying that you had not been there, and you could not act a falsehood by keeping silence."

"True; but I beg you to be just to your guardian, Miss de la Vera."

"Oh, David Lindsay, do you be just to yourself Is your boat here?"

"Yes, Miss. It is near this end of the Neck. I cannot land at the old fishing landing now, because of the new sea-wall and the locked boat-house blocking off all from the beach in that direction."

"I understand. The place is more like a prison than ever. Well, David Lindsay, please to walk up with me to the house. I have a parcel there for Granny Lindsay which I want you to help me carry to the boat; for I am going to Sandy Isle to see her this morning," said the young lady, in a tone of decision that admitted of no reply.

So the young fisherman walked obediently by her side until they reached the hall.

Gloria opened the front door, which, in that safe seclusion, was never locked in the daytime, and invited the young man to follow her in.

"Sit here in the hall, David Lindsay, while I run up to my room and get my parcel," she said, pointing to a chair.

At that moment the study door opened on the right, and Colonel de Crespigny came out and looked about as if to see what was the matter. Of course, his eyes fell at once upon the form of the young fisherman just seated in the chair.

"David Lindsay is here, at my request, to take me to Sandy Isle to see Dame Lindsay," said Gloria, pausing, with her hand upon the lowest post of the banisters, and her foot upon the lowest step of the stairs.

"Oh!" replied the colonel, not very graciously, as he looked slowly from the girl to the young man.

Gloria paused as if inviting or defying him to

any controversy on the subject; but he never said another word, and after a minute's delay went back into his study and shut the door.

Gloria flew up stairs to her chamber, and in a few moments came down with two parcels in her hand.

"I have made my bundle into two, you see; one for you to carry and one for me," she said, as she handed him the larger one; and perhaps she could not have explained, even to herself, the subtle delicacy of feeling that induced her to do this, so as not to seem to treat her old playmate as a servant or a porter, to carry all her luggage.

David wished to take both, but her peremptory decision prevented him.

Just as they were starting to go, Colônél de Crespigny emerged from his study, cloaked and gloved. He took his hat from the rack, saying pleasantly:

"I hope you will permit me to make a third in this party, my dear. I should like to go."

Gloria was dumfounded with astonishment. Besides, what could she say in opposition to so reasonable a proposal? She could say nothing.

The three walked out together, Colonel de Crespigny taking the little parcel from his ward's hand and carrying it himself.

She made no objection to this. She rather liked it, because David Lindsay was also carrying a bundle.

"What are the contents of these parcels, if I may inquire, my dear?" asked her guardian.

"Presents for my dee-ar Granny Lindsay that I brought all the way from Edinboro', but have not had the opportunity of taking to her before, because David Lindsay, whom I requested to come

and row me over to the isle, was always denied me when he came to the house," answered Gloria, ruthlessly.

"Ah!" said her guardian; but he offered no explanation.

David led the way to his boat, and assisted the lady and gentleman to enter it. He made them comfortable on the seats, and then taking both oars, rowed vigorously and rapidly for the little sand-hill.

In a very few moments they touched the beach, and the young boatman secured the boat and assisted the passengers to land.

"Now," said Gloria, addressing her two companions, as her queenly eyes traveled slowly from one to the other, "you two will please to bring my bundles as far as the door of the house, but no farther. I want you, if you please, then to return to the boat and wait for me; for I want my dee-ar Granny Lindsay all to myself to-day."

"Very well, little despot; you shall be obeyed," said Colonel de Crespigny, answering for both, as they led the way to the dame's cottage, followed by the young girl.

The day was cold, though clear, so the cottage door was closed.

"Here, now, leave the bundles, and go your way. I will join you in the boat, in half an hour," said Gloria.

Her two servants set down their burdens where they were told to put them, and went where they were ordered to go.

Gloria watched them—not out of sight, for that she could not, on the tiny islet, where, from the rocky centre to the sandy circumference, everything

was distinctly visible; but she watched them go down to the beach and begin to walk around it, before she knocked at the cottage door.

"I wonder if uncle will say anything to David Lindsay? I hope he will not, for it was I who brought him to the house this time," she said to herself, as she knocked again, for her first summons had not been answered. Now, however, the door opened, and Dame Lindsay appeared, smiling kindly, as of old, though looking rather feebler and more infirm than Gloria had ever seen her.

"Ah, young lady, is it 'eeself at last come to see the old 'oman? I knew 'ee would sooner or later! Come in, dearie. Eh! then, what is all this? and where is David, that he has not brought them for 'ee?" she said, on espying the parcels.

"Oh, Granny Lindsay, he did bring them for me, he and uncle; but I would not let them stop. I sent them back to the boat, because I wanted to have you all to myself," said Gloria, as she picked up one bundle, while the old woman took the other, and they entered the house together.

"Now sit 'ee down, and take off 'ee things, dearie," said the dame, as she placed a chair.

"I will sit down, dear Granny Lindsay, but not take off my hat this time, because uncle would come, and his doing so has prevented me from spending the day with you as I wished so much to do; for, oh! I remember what happy, happy days I used to have here with you and David! And nothing is changed here! Nothing, nothing! The very chest of drawers and table and chairs sit in the very places where they used to sit in the sweet old time."

"Why, dearie, everything sits where it must sit.

In a room like this everything is put into the place where it fits best, and there it has to stay. There is no room for alterations, dearie."

"Well, I like to see it as it used to be. Now, dear Granny Lindsay, I must tell you that I wanted to come to see you the day after my arrival home; but it was raining that day and for a week afterwards, and when it cleared off and David Lindsay so kindly came to fetch me, he was told that I was engaged. Well, I might have been doing something, and probably was, but it was nothing that I would not have willingly dropped for the sake of coming to see you, if I had only been told that David Lindsay had come for me; but I was not told—I was never told. I should never have known if I had not met him by chance this morning."

"I know, I know, dearie, David told me. It was 'ee good guardian's prudence, dearie, as I explained to David. 'Ee must mind 'ee guardian, dearie, and be guided and governed by him until 'ee comes of a proper age, little lady, and all the more must 'ee submit 'eeself to him who stands in a father's place, because 'ee has no mother, dearie," said the dame, speaking conscientiously and affectionately.

"Ah," thought the poor girl, "if she knew how he frightens and distresses me, she would not say that! I wonder if I could tell her? No, because I could not explain! How could I explain? There is nothing to explain."

With a sigh Gloria turned from her perplexed thoughts to the pleasant task before her.

She lifted both bundles from the floor to the table. She untied and opened one, and displayed a large double shawl of a fine black and white check, saying:

"Now dee-ar Granny Lindsay, I know you love old Scotland, where your forefathers came from, and you would like any good thing that came from Scotland. Now, I brought this from Edinboro' for you."

"Did 'ee, dearie? How beautiful it is! How lovely and soft, and large, and warm it is! How kind and thoughtful it was of 'ee to bring it to the old woman! But that is nothing new. 'Ee was always good, my dearie. Now, I'll tell 'ee how much I needed just such a shawl. My old gray woolen one is worn quite thin and threadbare. So 'ee sees how much good 'ee has done me, dearie."

"Oh, Granny Lindsay, I feel so grateful to you for liking it so much. And look here—oh, I hope you will like these, too!" said the young girl, as she unrolled the other bundle and displayed a dress of shepherd's cloth of a deep blue shade, and two woven underskirts of thick red flannel.

"Oh, dearie! What can I say to 'ee now for all 'ee gracious gifts? What? The old woman is almost dumb-struck, dearie, but her heart is full," said the dame, in a voice very low, and trembling with the emotion that filled her aged eyes with tears.

"Do you like them? Will they make you more comfortable? Oh, I am so glad!"

"And here is something I got for David Lindsay. It is only a dozen Scotch pocket-handkerchiefs; but I have worked his name in the corners with my hair. Will you give them to him from his old playmate?"

"Yes, dearie, surely, if 'ee wishes it," replied the dame, in a subdued and broken voice, for she could now refuse nothing to the affectionate girl who had

remembered her, even in a foreign country, and brought home comforts for her age.

"And now, dee-ar Granny Lindsay, I must leave you. My half hour is up."

"I wish 'ee could stay all day, dearie."

"So do I; I meant to stay, but—but my guardian came with me and spoiled all my plans."

"'Ee gardeen means 'ee well, dearie. 'Ee mustn't rebel against his just authority."

"Good-by, dee-ar Granny Lindsay."

"Good-by, since 'ee must go. The good Lord keep 'ee, dearie."

And so Gloria left the cottage, and walked rapidly down to the boat, where she found her guardian and the young fisherman waiting for her.

She entered and seated herself in the stern.

David Lindsay took up the oars and rowed quickly to the boat-house, which they reached in a few minutes.

Colonel de Crespigny handed his ward to the steps, and with a cool—"Thanks. Good-day," to the young boatman, led her up the stairs and through to the other side of the wall.

"I wish, uncle dear, that you would leave the key in the lock always. It makes the place feel like a prison to have the boat-house, which is the only gateway and passage through the sea-wall, locked up all the time."

"I will do anything you wish, my dear Gloria. You have only to make your will known and it shall be obeyed," replied the colonel.

"I thank you, dear uncle. And since you are so kind, will you give orders that in future, whenever David Lindsay comes to take me to see my dee-ar old friend on the islet, I may promptly be informed

of his presence?" inquired Gloria, with a grave earnestness that was more like a gracious command than a request.

"My dearest, yes! even that, if you make a point of it."

"I do make a point of it."

"I sent the young man away, I should explain, because I wished you quietly rid of him."

"Rid of David Lindsay, uncle! Why should I be rid of him?"

"Gloria, I appreciate your need of a mother's guidance; but—is it possible that you have no intuitions to direct you?" gravely and sadly inquired the colonel.

"If by intuitions, uncle, you mean inward teachings, yes. I have them; they are, perhaps, the best, if not the only instructions I have; and from them I learn to understand, respect, and trust him—David Lindsay—more than I can any other human being, except, perhaps, his grandmother and—yourself."

"His grandmother and myself! Thank you, my dear," said the colonel, wincing.

Gloria laughed. She very seldom laughed, but when she did the silver cadence of her laughter was like the shiver of silver bells, a delight to hear.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "I beg your pardon, uncle! I should have said the Emperor Napoleon and yourself; only, unfortunately, I am not intimate enough with his imperial majesty to know whether I respect him or not."

"Nonsense, Gloria. Be serious, my child. You may respect this young man, who has grown up on the estate; you may understand and respect him in his proper place, as much as you please; but if

you make a companion of him, who is to understand you?—not to ask, who is to respect you, my dear?"

"Uncle!" exclaimed Gloria, flushing to the very edges of her radiant hair. "Uncle! Is it making a companion of David Lindsay to have him row me in a boat where I wish to go?"

"Yes, Gloria, decidedly so, when the boat is his own and he takes you to his own home."

"How dreadfully you put the case, uncle!" exclaimed the girl, crimson with humiliation.

"I put it truly, dear Gloria," answered the colonel, pursuing his advantage unsparingly. "I put it truly. You will injure yourself irreparably by such eccentric unconventionality. My poor child, it is your mother who should instruct you in all these matters, not a profane heathen of a man; only unfortunately you have no mother, and so you must even be guided by so poor a counsellor as myself."

"I do not see what harm can come of my going to see Dame Lindsay in her grandson's boat."

"No, you do not see; but others will, my child, and they will criticise you. Objectionable attachments have been formed and improper marriages contracted before now between ladies of rank and men of low degree, and you——"

"Sir! I PROTEST against this talk!" she indignantly interrupted. "To whom do your remarks point? To me? To David Lindsay? Do you dare to suppose, Colonel de Crespigny, that I should ever dream—that he would ever think of—oh! what an odious thought is in your mind! Never do you dare, sir, to hint such a thing to me again!"

"I hope never to have the occasion, my dear," coolly replied the colonel.

"Detestable, revolting, abhorrent, odious! Oh! that you should dare to hint such a humiliation to me! I can never forgive you for it, Colonel de Crespigny! I feel more, much more than offended! I feel insulted, dishonored, humiliated! I do!" cried Gloria, vehemently.

But in all her indignation there was no scorn of David Lindsay, or of his humble calling; for in her innocent and loyal way she loved and respected her old playmate, even as she did his aged relative on the islet. It was the hypothesis of "an objectionable attachment" and "an improper marriage" at which she revolted. And if, instead of a poor, uncultivated young fisherman, the most accomplished prince on earth had been in question, she would have felt equally offended.

They had now reached the steps leading up to the portico of the front door.

Colonel de Crespigny paused there, and with his hand resting on one of the iron posts, he inquired:

"Well, shall I give the orders you requested me to issue? Shall I say that the young fisherman must be admitted to your presence whenever he may come here and ask to see you?"

"No! On your soul!" impetuously answered the girl. "No! You have killed David Lindsay! You have murdered the harmless playmate of my happy childhood! I shall never, never see him more! He is dead and buried!"

"*'Requiescat in pace,'*" replied the colonel solemnly, lifting his hat.

Gloria passed him, opened the front door, and fled up into the safety of her room.

Her "intuitions" warned the motherless child to avoid a *tête-à-tête* with Colonel de Crespigny.

CHAPTER XII

HOPELESS LOVE

He deemed that time, he deemed that pride
Had quenched, at length, his boyish flame,
Nor knew, till seated by her side,
His heart in all save hope the same.

BYRON.

MEANWHILE David Lindsay had returned to his grandmother's cottage, his soul filled with the image of the lovely girl he had just landed on the promontory.

"I shall go mad if it continues much longer," he groaned. "Yes, it will craze me! If I could only escape and fly to new places and scenes that would not remind me of her so constantly, so bitterly! But I cannot leave my grandmother, who has no one but me. I must stay, though I am bound to the rack. I must see my angel and not open my lips in adoration! I must suffer and not utter a cry! Why, it would insult her to tell her I love her! And yet in our innocent childhood she has set by me hours reading out of the same books. She kindled a soul under the poor fisher lad's rough bosom!—a soul to love and to suffer the anguish of a lost Heaven in the loss of her. Oh, my little angel, did

you know what you were doing? Oh, my little angel, my little angel, who am I that I should dare to love you? A poor, rude fisherman, to whom you came as a messenger from heaven to inspire him with intelligent life, with a soul to love and suffer. Oh! my darling, you fill my life! You are my life! I see your bright face shining in the darkness of my room at night. I hear your sweet voice ringing in the silence! What shall I do? Ah, Heaven, what shall I do? If I could ship on one of these schooners that touch here sometimes, and if I could go to new scenes where I should never meet her again, I might conquer this madness. But that is impossible at present. I must not fly from duty. I must stay here and meet whatever fate may have in store for me, and that is insanity or death, I think. Oh! I fear, I fear that I shall go mad some day, and in my madness tell her how I love her! And then—the deluge!”

So absorbed was the poor lad's soul in his love and his woe, that it was a purely mechanical and unconscious work to row back to the islet, secure his boat, and walk up to the cot.

He did not “come to himself” until he had run his head against the door.

His grandmother opened it, smiled, and said:

“Come in, David, and see what the little lady has left here for me and for you.”

He started and entered the cottage.

Fortunately for him, the dim eyes of age did not perceive his strong emotion.

“Sit 'ee down, David, and look. Here are two ribbed flannel petticoats, such as couldn't be got in this country for love nor money. And here is a navy blue shepherd's cloth, and a fine large double plaid

shawl. Look at 'em, David, lad! But Lor', men don't know anything about women's wear. Well, then, look 'ee here. Here is your present, David—a dozen lovely, large, fine white linen handkerchiefs, every one of them marked with your full name by her own hand, and with her own golden hair, David—with the child's own golden hair."

"Give them to me!" cried the young man, eagerly catching the parcel from her hand, looking around like some wild animal, with prey that he feared would be snatched from him, and then running up the narrow stairs that led to his own loft.

"What's come to the poor lad?" cried the old woman, gazing after him. "The Lord defend him from being taken with love!"

Meantime David Lindsay had scrambled up into his own little den.

It was a poor place, with only a leaning roof meeting in a peak overhead, with hardly room enough to stand upright, with bare walls, bare floor, and only one small window of four panes in front, which opened on hinges.

It contained a rude but clean bed, covered with a blue and white patchwork quilt, and one chest that stood under the front window, and one shelf, on which stood Gloria's precious books. He sat down on the chest, for there was no other seat, and opened his parcel of handkerchiefs, and examined them one by one. He saw his own name on each, worked in minute golden letters, formed of Gloria's own radiant hair. He pressed each to his lips, to his heart.

"Oh, more precious than all the treasures of Hindostan's mines are these to me," he murmured—"her own sacred hair, her own hallowed hands"

work! Oh, my angel, my angel, no word suits you but this—‘angel.’ I have this much of you, at least, and I will never part with it while I live—while I live—and then, afterwards, beyond this world, may there not be some realms of bliss where we may meet, as we met in guileless childhood and love, without a thought of any barrier of rank between us?”

This, and much more, murmured the young man to himself, as he pressed the handkerchiefs to his heart, his lips and burning forehead.

But the voice of his aged relative recalled him to his duty. With fond superstition he folded one handkerchief and put it in his bosom, with her bright hair next his heart. The others he folded carefully and put in his chest. Then he went below to hew wood and fetch water for the needs of the little home.

Gloria did not meet her uncle until the dinner hour, when her short, impulsive resentment melted away before the mournful, even meek, reserve of his manner.

After dinner she went into the drawing-room, sat down at the piano, and played for him as usual, until the hour of retiring.

The next morning, after their breakfast, as she turned to go up stairs, he called to her:

“Gloria, my dear, will you not come into the library and sit with me, as usual?”

“No, thanks, uncle dear. I have a letter to write to Aunt Agrippina.”

“Can you not write it at one of the library tables?”

“I would rather go up into my room, uncle.”

“But why?”

"Because—well—I would rather."

"Are you afraid of me, Gloria?" he inquired, very mournfully.

She hesitated for a moment, and then answered, firmly:

"Yes, I am."

"But why should you be?"

"I—don't—know," she answered.

"Then that is a most unjust and unreasonable fear of yours, for which you can assign no cause, my child."

She looked down and made no answer.

"Do you not yourself think so, Gloria?"

"Yes, no; I don't know. Let me go up stairs now, please, uncle," she said, in growing distress.

"I do not hinder you, my child. You are as free as air. Go," he said.

Relieved to be free, she ran up stairs; but happening to look down as she turned around on the landing, she saw him standing still, looking so lonely and miserable that her heart reproached her for selfishness, if not for cruelty. She paused and hesitated for a moment and then ran down again and said:

"Uncle dear, if you want me, I will come in and sit with you. Of course I can write my letter just as well on the library table. Do you want me?"

"My child, I always want you. Every moment of my life I want you," he answered in a low tone as he opened the library for her to enter.

She had a little rosewood writing-desk of her own on one of the tables.

He went and opened it for her and placed a chair before it.

As soon as she had seated herself he went and sat

down at his own reading stand and assumed an air of melancholy reserve that he knew would touch her heart and calm her fears.

"I must be very patient and very cautious in dealing with my dear, my birdling, if I would ever win her to my bosom," he said to himself.

And from that day for many days he was very guarded in his manner to his sensitive ward, maintaining always a mournfully affectionate yet somewhat reserved demeanor.

Gloria was not quite reassured. Her confidence, once so rudely shaken, could not be quite firmly re-established. She continued to decline a *tête-à-tête* with him whenever she could do so without rudeness or unkindness. She walked out more than usual. The weather continued to be very fine for the season.

Christmas Eve was a most glorious day. There was not a cloud in all the sky. The sun shone down with dazzling splendor from the deep blue heavens. The ripples of the sea flashed and sparkled like liquid sapphires. The woods on the main glowed in the light.

The scene was too tempting.

Gloria put on her fur jacket and hood and walked forth to the "Neck."

She found the tide at its lowest ebb and the road to the main high and dry.

She set off to walk across it. It was the first time she had ever done so. The "Neck," indeed, was a natural bridge of rock connecting the promontory to the main and affording an excellent roadway when the tide was low, but quite impassable, being at least six feet under water when the tide was high.

It was very low now and the path was very clear.

Gloria walked on, so inspired by the glory and gladness of the sun, the sky, the sea, the woods that her spirits soared like a bird, and, like a bird, broke forth in song.

She sang as she walked. The way was long but joyous with light and beauty, even though the season was near mid-winter.

At length she reached the main and bent her step to the gorgeous woods, still wearing their regal autumn dress.

Gloria plunged into their depths and rambled and reveled in their delightful solitudes. The song birds had flown farther south, yet the air seemed full of jubilant music. Was it in the air or in her own spirit? She could not tell. She was so gay and glad! She wandered on and on, tempted by vistas of crimson, golden, and purple avenues, more graceful in form than classic arches.

At length she spied, at some distance off, in the deepest depths of the forest, a scene like a conflagration—a cluster of trees burning, glowing and sparkling like fire in the rays of the sun that struck down upon their tops.

Fascinated by the vision, she made her way toward it, and found a clump of holly trees, thick with bright scarlet berries.

“Oh, I must have some of these to decorate the house to-night,” she said, as she began to pull those that were in her reach. But when she had plucked all that hung low, she found that she had not enough for her purpose.

“I cannot get any more, so I had better take these home and come back again and bring Laban

to climb the trees for me, and get enough from the top branches."

With this resolve she turned and retraced her steps, but soon lost herself in the pathless woods, and wandered about for hours trying to find her way out of them. She had no fear whatever. She was sure that she should emerge safely some time or other. She only felt some little haste to get home time enough to bring Laban back for the holly.

At length her confidence was justified. She caught a glimpse of the sea through a thinner growth of the woods, and, walking toward it, soon came out on the bank above the "Neck." She descended quickly, and began to cross.

No one in that neighborhood would have ventured to go over the "Neck" at such a time. It was in pure ignorance that Gloria did it.

She did not even notice how much the Neck had narrowed since she crossed it four hours before, when the tide was at its lowest ebb, and was even then turning. It had been coming in ever since, and now there was but about four feet width of the road left in the middle of the Neck—abundant space for a foot-path if it should not narrow too rapidly.

Gloria had not a thought of danger when she set out to recross the Neck.

She walked on, singing as she went, and if a wave higher than usual dashed quite across her path, why, it fell back immediately, only wetting her shoes and skirts a little.

She went on, singing, while the glad waves danced up each side her road, coming nearer and nearer, narrowing her path.

Still she went on, singing, having to stop some-

times when her path would be entirely covered by a rising wave, and wait till it had fallen back.

Then again she went on, singing, ever singing, until she reached a spot about midway between the main and the promontory, when a wave, higher and stronger than before, struck her, staggered her, and nearly threw her down. Then for a moment she quailed, and ceased to sing. But the next instant the wave had receded and left a narrow path clear before her.

Then she hurried on again, not singing now, but with an awful consciousness of danger upon her; an awful prevision of the world beyond this, which her spirit might reach before her body should touch the shore.

Another higher, stronger wave came rising and roaring, and struck her down. It receded instantly, and she struggled to her feet, half stunned, strangled, and blinded.

Soon the path was entirely under water, and she had to wade in half knee-deep, and with that prevision, awful, holy, sweet, of being on the threshold of the other life.

"Mother, mother, if I must go, if I must go, come and meet me. I'm afraid, oh, I'm afraid of the great dark!" was her mute prayer, as another grand wave, howling like some furious beast of prey, reared itself above and threw her down.

Once more, as it fell back howling, she struggled up to her feet, more stunned, strangled, blinded, and dazed than before, and toiling for dear life, waded on knee-deep in water. Her limbs were failing, her head was dizzy, her senses were leaving her.

"I must go—I am going. Oh, Lord Jesus! Thou

who art 'the Resurrection and the Life,' raise me! save me!" she breathed, in a strange half trance, in which she saw the heavens opened.

And at that moment the last wave struck her down, seized her and whirled her away.

CHAPTER XIII

ON A STRANGE BED

Will she again,
From that death-like repose,
When those sealed eyes uncloze,
Awake to pain? ANON.

It was late in the afternoon of the same day that saw Gloria de la Vera swept away by the tide.

In the cosy cottage on the sandy islet, old Dame Lindsay sat over the bright, open wood fire, knitting busily; the tea-kettle hung over the blaze, singing merrily; the covered "spider" sat upon the hearth, emitting a spicy odor of baking gingerbread; the black "pussy" was coiled up in one corner, and the white puppy in the other.

The tea-table stood in the middle of the floor, set for two persons, gay with the best cups and saucers on the bright japanned waiter, and tempting with plates full of delicately sliced ham and cold bread, and a pretty print of fresh butter.

Dame Lindsay at length rolled up her knitting and laid it aside on the mantel-shelf; took off her spectacles and put them in their case, and that into

her pocket, then picked up the little iron tongs and lifted the lid from the spider to examine the progress of her cakes, found them doing well, and covered them again.

Finally she went to the window and looked out across the sea to the shore where the wooded hills rolled backward to the western horizon, behind which the setting sun was dropping out of sight.

"Well, now, I do wonder what can keep David? He promised to be back before sunset, and he never broke a promise nor missed an appointment before," she said, as she held one hand above her eyes and scanned the track of waters between the main shore and the little landing-place on the islet.

She watched until the sun had set, the faint afterglow had faded from the sky and sea, and the short winter twilight of the shortest days had darkened into night.

"Something has happened. I trust in the Lord it is nothing ill," she said, as she left the window and went to the fireplace, and lighted the two home-dipped tallow candles that stood on the mantel-piece.

She did not pull down the blue window blind; she left it up, saying to herself:

"He shall see the light of home to cheer him across the dark sea, poor lad."

She had scarcely said so much when the sound of hurrying footsteps smote her ears, and before she had time to cross the room, the door was violently pushed open, and David Lindsay strode into the house, bareheaded, with disordered hair, haggard face and starting eyes; wearing nothing but a wet and frozen shirt and trowsers, and bearing in his

arms a girl's lifeless form, wrapped closely in his own great-coat.

"Gloria is dead! She is dead! I saw her drowned before my eyes! I saw her drowned before I could reach her! My darling! My darling! My angel! Oh, my little angel!" he groaned, as he bore her to the bed, laid her on it and dropped on his knees, burying his head beside her.

"Father of mercies! how did it happen?" cried the old dame, clasping her hands in anguish, as she came up.

"Oh, don't ask me now! Try to recover her, try! Oh, she must not! shall not die!" exclaimed the young man, starting like a maniac from his kneeling posture, and staring around him with a wild manner, half prayerful, half defiant, wholly insane.

"Yes, we must try! We must never give up," quickly replied Dame Lindsay, who in her long life as a fisherman's daughter, wife and mother, had had varied experience in drowned persons, resuscitated or buried.

And fast as age and infirmities would permit, she scrambled up the narrow stairs that led to the loft and quickly drew the blankets and mattress from David's bed and rolled them down to the room below.

Then she followed them in their descent, and straightened the mattress on the floor, and laid the blankets over it.

"Now lift her up, and lay her here, David, and then leave the room. I must take off her wet clothes, wind her in a warm blanket, and roll her. That I must do without your help," said the dame, with a calm authority that would have compelled obedience from any one.

But the young man indeed was so stupefied and distracted by anguish and despair, that he was more than willing to be led or driven.

Moaning and groaning in bitterest woe, he lifted the lifeless form and laid it on its right side on the blanket over the mattress on the floor, and then went up stairs and threw himself down near the landing to pray with all his soul for her revival, and to listen with all his senses for any murmur of her returning life that might reach him there.

Meanwhile the dame rolled the drowned girl over on her face, with her wrist bent under her forehead to raise it, and then leaving her so for a moment, went and hung a large blanket over several chairs before the fire. Then she removed the wet raiment from the victim, and laid down the hot blanket, and rolled her over and wrapped her in it, and rolled and rubbed until some good results began to appear, and her own strength to wane.

Then she called to the anxious watcher above:

"Come down, David, and help me now. There is hope, my lad. There is hope!"

"Oh, thank the Lord! Thank the Lord! From this time forth I will live to the Lord!" exclaimed the young man in an earnest outburst of gratitude, too deep for gladness, as he hurried down the stairs.

"Ah! my boy, I said there was hope, not certainty," sighed the dame.

"If there is hope, there is certainty. If the Lord 'is not mocked,' neither does he mock his children. I have prayed, oh! how I have prayed! And the answer is, there is hope! So there is certainty!" exclaimed David Lindsay, as he dropped on his

knees before the prostrate form that lay wound in the blanket on the mattress.

"You know what to do, David. Lay your hand between her shoulders and continue to move her gently to and fro, if you wish to save her life. When I get the bed ready we will lay her in it," said the old woman, as she spread more blankets to heat before the fire.

When they were ready she put one over the bottom sheet in the bed, and called her grandson to lift the precious burden just as it was and lay it there.

When he had obeyed her, she spread another warm blanket over the form, which now began to quiver slightly as from pain.

"She lives! Oh, thank Heaven, she does live!" cried David.

"Easy, lad! Easy! There is more hope, but no certainty yet. I could not feel any pulse, as I held her wrist just now," said Dame Lindsay, cautiously.

In mad haste, David thrust his hand amid the wrappings and found and felt the delicate wrist.

"It beats! It beats! Her pulse does beat! I can scarcely feel it, it is so small—but it beats!" he cried.

"I hope it may be so," said the dame, who had taken a little brandy from a small bottle that she kept for emergencies and put it into a mug with some boiling water, sugar and spice.

When the highly stimulating cordial was ready, she brought it to the bedside and looked at the face of the girl.

That face had changed from its white repose to a look of helpless, intense suffering.

"You see she is recovering!" exclaimed David, triumphantly.

"Yes, I see she is, poor child!" replied the dame, as with a small teaspoon she tried to pass a little of the spiced brandy, drop by drop, between the pale and writhen lips.

Much has been falsely said and written about the agony of death, when every doctor knows that death, in itself, is no agony at all; and every true Christian feels that it is a release from all pain, a delicious falling asleep, for a few hours, to awake in the glad and glorious surprise of the higher and better life.

But no one who has not experienced it knows, or can know, the insufferable anguish of resuscitation from apparent death. The almost stagnant blood beginning to circulate again through nearly collapsed veins and arteries, inflicts tortures upon every nerve—tortures unheard of in the cruelest inquisition. Red-hot needles seem to be piercing every nerve of the body and pore of the skin. It is an agony that even the torpor of the brain does not overcome. And the victim writhes and moans with anguish, while quite unconscious of his condition or surroundings. He only feels; he knows nothing.

As soon as the sufferer, struggling through pain back to life, began to breathe more freely, Dame Lindsay, without speaking to her, or in any way disturbing her, quietly administered a composing drink that soon sent her into a sweet, natural sleep. Then she placed bottles of hot water to her feet and between her shoulders, covered her up very warmly, and hung a clean quilt before the bed to shade her from the light of the fire.

"Now, lad, she is comfortable, and when she

wakes up, whether to-night or to-morrow morning, she will be all right. She will want nourishment the very first thing. Fortunately, I have got that piece of beef 'ee brought for to-morrow's dinner. I will cut the lean pieces from it and make some beef tea, and keep it by the fire ready for her. But now carry the mattress and things back up stairs and come back to 'ee supper. 'Ee must be hungry by this time, and—— Eh? Why there 'ee stands in 'ee wet clothes all this time, and I taking no notice. Go change 'em, boy! Go change 'em this minute, or 'ee'll get 'ee death of cold. Eh! to think I should 'a forgot 'ee! But the lass was so near dead! Go, lad, go!"

"Don't be uneasy, grandmother. I don't catch cold from sea water; and now I am so fired with joy and gratitude that I couldn't take cold," said the young man, as he cleared the floor of bedding and carried the bundle up stairs.

Meanwhile, the dame put the supper—hot gingerbread and all—on the table; and by the time she had finished the work, David came down in dry clothing to join her.

She refrained from questioning him until he had got through with his evening meal, and she had cleared away the table.

Then, when they were seated together before the cheerful fire, Dame Lindsay knitting, and occasionally watching the saucepan which contained the beef tea she had made and set to simmer on the coals, and David busy with a bit of bone carving in his hand, the old woman said:

"Now, lad, tell me how all this happened."

"I was in the boat coming from the main when I happened to look towards the Rogues' Neck, and

there I saw some one attempting to cross. The passenger was about half way over and the tide was rising rapidly. I knew, of course, whoever it might be, could never succeed in reaching either shore, but would certainly be overtaken by the tide and drowned unless I could reach the Neck in time for rescue."

"And 'ee didn't know it was she?" inquired the dame.

"No, I did not even know whether it was a man or a woman. I could only see that it was some one. But I turned and rowed as fast as I could for the Neck. Then I saw it was a woman, and I rowed faster than ever; for the tide was so high even then that she could scarcely keep her feet."

"Poor lass! Go on, David."

"I pulled on the oars as hard as I could and made the best speed; I shouted to her to take courage. She did not seem to hear or see me; but, oh, grandmother, when I got within a few yards of that spot I recognized her—in the same instant that I saw her whelmed off and whirled away! Indeed, for a moment, I seemed to have lost my senses. But soon I rallied and rowed to the spot where I had seen her disappear. Then I threw off my overcoat and jacket to be ready, and I watched to see her rise. I knew she would rise near the Neck, or be thrown upon it by the returning wave, so there I watched. I saw her rise at last. I threw myself into the sea, dived as she went down again, caught her raiment, dragged her to the surface, and drew her toward the boat. I had some difficulty in recovering the boat, and getting into it with my precious burden. She was quite insensible and cold, but I wrapped her in my jacket and overcoat, and laid her down in

the bottom of the boat on her right side, with her breast and face turned downward, and her wrists bent under her forehead, and I kept one of my hands between her shoulders, moving her gently from time to time—as we do to recover the drowned, you know—while I rowed as well as I could with the other hand, and so reached our landing at last. I brought her here because it was so much nearer than her own home. But, oh, granny, when I lifted her out of the boat I thought she was dead!”

“So she would have been, lad, if it hadn’t been for ’ee care,” said the dame.

“And have I, by the Lord’s help, saved her life? Are you sure she will take no fatal harm from that ice-cold plunge in the sea?” inquired the young man, in a painful doubt, strangely inconsistent with his expressed confidence at a less hopeful time.

Before replying to his question the dame went to the bedside and examined her patient, then she came back and said:

“Yes, lad, ’ee has certainly saved the little lady’s life. She will take no harm now. She is in a sound sleep and a gentle perspiration. She is perfectly safe now. So ’ee may rest satisfied.”

“‘Satisfied,’ dear granny!” exclaimed the youth, with a look of radiant happiness on his face. “‘Satisfied?’ Why, I am overjoyed, crowned, blessed! I would rather have saved her precious life than to have won all the wealth, fame, power and glory of this world!”

“I believe ’ee, lad! I believe ’ee!”

“But, what do I say? The glory of this world? Why, I would rather have saved her sacred life than have won Heaven!”

“Eh! Stop there, lad! ’Ee’s growing profane!

Is that 'ee gratitude to the Lord? Stop at the glory of this world, lad, and do not compare any earthly good with the heavenly blessedness," said the dame, laying down her knitting and placing her spectacles high on her cap that she might look him straight in the face with her earnest blue eyes.

"I did not mean to be profane," said David, meekly.

The good woman resumed her work, and David took up his own, and they worked in silence until the hour for retiring drew near, when Dame Lindsay finally rolled up her knitting, took off her spectacles and put them both away, and said:

"Now, David, read a chapter from the Word, and then get 'ee to bed, lad."

"And you, granny? Where will you sleep?" inquired the young man.

"I shall sit in my old arm-chair by the fire as long as I can keep up, and then I shall lie down on the bed beside the lassie, so as to wake readily if she should stir."

"Don't sit up too long, dear granny. You are not able."

"Don't 'ee fear, Davie; I'll lie down when I grow weary."

David brought the Bible and seated himself at the table opposite his aged relative, and read parts of the first and second chapters of Matthew, recording the genealogy and birth of our Saviour. Then the dame folded her hands and reverently prayed for both, that they might be able to receive the Lord in their affections in that sacred Christmas season, and be led by Him forever.

"Now, David, lad, get 'ee to bed," she said, as she arose from her knees.

"If I can be of any use during the night, will you call me, granny?"

"Ay, lad, be sure of that."

Then David kissed her withered hand and went up to his loft; but instead of going into bed, he placed himself on the floor with his feet through the trap-door, resting on the highest step, and there he sat and watched and listened until Christmas Eve passed into Christmas Morn.

About midnight he heard his grandmother rise from her chair and cross the room, to lie down beside the sleeping girl.

Then he bent his head and called:

"Granny! granny!"

"Ay, lad, what is it?"

"Can I do anything at all?"

"Nay, boy. Get 'ee back to bed."

She did not suspect that he had not been in bed.

He resumed his watch and kept it up until daylight. He scarcely heard a sound from below, except an occasional slight sigh, or motion from the old woman, who, like all aged persons, was a very light sleeper.

When morning dawned, David heard his grandmother rise and open the windows.

Then he called down the stairs once more:

"Granny——"

"Ay, lad."

"Can I help you now?"

"Ay, lad, put on 'ee clothes and come down."

David had not taken off his clothes, and therefore had not to put them on. He instantly descended the narrow stairs and stood before his grandmother.

"I never knew 'ee to dress so quick, lad," she said.

"That was because I was not undressed. What can I do first, granny?"

"Ay, indeed! 'Ee's been sitting up all night! It was a useless loss of rest, Davie, but well meant. Take 'eeself off now to the shed and bring in some wood, lad."

The young man went out to do her bidding, and soon returned with an armful of brown hickory logs, which he laid upon the fire.

Then he took the tea-kettle out and filled it from the cistern and brought it back and hung it over the blaze.

Every movement of the old woman and the young man was made quietly and noiselessly, so as not to disturb the calm sleeper, who as yet gave no signs of waking.

"Now, lad, I'll leave 'ee here to watch the kettle. Take it off as soon as it boils, and don't forget to turn the johnny cake," said Dame Lindsay, as she took her fresh sweet pail and went out to milk the cow, a duty she would never allow David to do for her. Indeed, the act of setting a man or boy to milk would have shocked her ideas of the fitness of things. She would have thought it an insult to the cow.

When she had closed the door behind her, David Lindsay gave a glance to the fireplace, to see that all was right there, and then he went on tiptoe to the side of the bed and gazed reverently on "the sleeping beauty."

The quilt that had been hung in front to shield her eyes from the ruddy blaze of the fire on the previous night, when repose was so necessary to her shattered nervous system, was now removed to give her more air; for the time had come when it would

be well for her to awake. The bed had been straightened into perfect order and the white counterpane drawn up, so that only the lovely face, laying with its right cheek on the pillow, and forehead towards the front of the bed, was visible. The golden hair had been drawn away from the nape of the neck and carried up over the pillow, where it lay a shining mass of curls. A very pathetic face it was, with the tender eyes half shut, the sweet lips half closed. Her sleep looked like the "deep deliciousness of death"; though had it been really that, it might have been said with equal truth that it looked like the sweetest sleep.

David Lindsay sank on his knees beside the bed and gazed on the beautiful, unconscious face turned towards him, as he never would have dared to gaze had those features been instinct with wakeful intelligence. And then, out of the fullness of his heart, he began to murmur words of passionate love to those sealed ears that he never would have ventured to utter had they been listening—words of reverential, worshiping love, that for their incoherence and extravagance could scarcely bear repetition here. He lifted a tress of the floating golden hair and pressed it to his lips, while his tears fell thick and heavily.

"Why do I love you?" he sighed at length. "I know it is vain, and worse than vain! I am but a clod of the earth! And you, what are you? I scarcely know. Something so pure, so precious, so sacred, that it seems sacrilege to touch this halo around your head, these peerless tresses. Yet I love you! I love you! Clod as I am, I love you, oh! unattainable blessing! I might as well love a queen on her throne, the sun in the heavens, the moon, or

any glorious, infinitely distant star! Oh, Gloria! Gloria! Bright seraph, why did you come and shine on this poor earth that I am, to quicken it with a living soul—to wake it to such love, such suffering, such despair?”

Down went his head again upon the side of the bed, while his bosom heaved with heavy sobs, and his tears fell like rain.

“David Lindsay.”

Her sweet voice fell on his ears like a benediction.

He lifted his head. She was awake, and gazing gently on his troubled face.

“What is the matter, David Lindsay? What has happened?” she inquired, with a look of sympathy and deep perplexity.

“Nothing; I mean—yes, something has happened, but it is well over, and, oh, how I thank heaven to hear you speak again!” he said, with an effort to recover his self-control, as he arose from his knees.

“What? Is the little lady awake at last? Well, it is time. It would not have been good for her to have slept longer,” said the voice of Dame Lindsay, who had just entered the room and approached the bed.

“She has just this instant opened her eyes, and has scarcely yet collected her thoughts, I think,” said the young man, in a low tone, as he gave place to the old woman, and went out of the house to conceal from her the traces of his strong emotion.

“How does ’ee feel, dearie?” inquired the dame, bending over the revived girl.

“I don’t think I quite know,” answered Gloria, with a bewildered look, as she passed her hand over her forehead, as if to clear away some mental mist

of forgetfulness, and opened her eyes, half raised herself in bed and gazed around her.

"Does 'ee know me, dearie?"

"Oh, yes, dee-ar, good Dame Lindsay, but I don't remember——"

"Does 'ee know where 'ee is, darling?"

"To be sure I do know this dee-ar old cottage, but I can't remember coming here at all!"

"As how should 'ee, indeed, darling? 'Ee knowed nothing about it! Now, don't talk any more, and don't even think, if 'ee can help it; but lie still until I bring 'ee some strong beef tea to nourish 'ee and give strength," said the good woman, as she laid the girl's head back on the pillow and drew the counterpane up to her chin.

But a change came over Gloria's face. Dark memory, like a cloud, arose and overcast it; yet she mistook the reality for a dream, and she shuddered as she said:

"Oh, dee-ar Granny Lindsay, don't go yet! Give me your hand, and let me hold you fast! I am frightened—I am frightened——"

"What is the matter with 'ee, dearie?" inquired the sympathetic woman, as she gave her hand, which the girl clasped spasmodically, and held fast.

"Oh, Granny, Granny Lindsay, I have had such a horrid, horrid nightmare! I dreamed that I was drowning, and, oh, I saw and felt it all, as if it had been real! Oh, Granny Lindsay, don't leave me yet, but tell me what has happened, and how I came to be here? Have I been ill a long time?—and delirious? I have heard of people being so ill and delirious that they could know nothing of the passage of time. Uncle was so, you know, after auntie died. Have I been so long?"

"No, dearie, 'ee couldn't talk so fast, if 'ee had been," replied the dame, with a smile.

"Then what has happened, and how is it that I am here instead of at home?"

"'Ee has had a ducking in the sea, lassie, no worse. 'Ee was swept off the Rogue's Neck by the tide, when 'ee was too late in trying to cross, and 'ee might have——"

"Oh, yes, yes, yes, it was no nightmare, but an awful fact!" murmured the girl to herself, as she pressed her hands upon her face.

"And 'ee might have been drowned sure enough if Davie hadn't seen 'ee from his boat and picked 'ee up, dearie."

"David Lindsay?" breathed the girl.

"Ay, dearie, David Lindsay. He picked 'ee up and brought 'ee home here, because it was so much nearer than the hall, 'ee knows, dearie."

"David Lindsay saved my life!" murmured the girl, dreamily.

"Ay, little lady, he did; and so 'ee got no worse harm than a cold ducking—though indeed 'ee was quite insensible, and seemed lifeless when 'ee was brought here in the arms of Davie. But 'ee's all right now, dearie."

"David Lindsay saved my life!" reiterated the girl, dwelling fondly on the words, and on the thought.

"Eh! lass, surely yes, and we must thank the Lord that 'ee was saved."

"Yes; and David Lindsay, too! Oh! I am pleased that it was he, my old playmate, and no other. What will uncle say now?" muttered the girl, still dreamily.

"Eh! dearie, he would say that 'ee ought to take

some nourishing food immediately. Ain't 'ee hungry now, say?"

"Yes," promptly replied Gloria.

"Now 'ee knows all about it, 'ee'll not be afeard to let me go?"

"Oh, no!" said Gloria, smiling; for she was every moment growing better.

The dame brought her the beef tea and dry toast from the fire, and made her take that first, saying:

"'Ee shall have a cup of coffee or tea, whichever 'ee likes, presently; but this is the best for 'ee now."

Gloria obediently consumed all the beef tea and dry toast, and relished both.

"Now I feel well; but I think I would rather lie here a few minutes longer, and not try to get up yet, if you will let me, dee-ar Dame Lindsay."

"To be sure, little lady. 'Ee should lie there quietly all the morning, and when 'ee rises should rest quietly in the house for a day or two. Could 'ee be satisfied to stay here till 'ee gets over the shock?"

"Oh, yes, dee-ar Dame Lindsay, I was always so happy when here with you. Oh, I wish there would come a snow-storm, and I would be snow-bound here for a long time. But, oh, poor uncle! Does he know that David Lindsay saved my life?"

"No, dearie; there has been no time to tell him. It is early in the morning yet, 'ee knows; but after breakfast Davie must go and tell him that 'ee's safe."

"And that I must stay here for a few days," added Gloria.

"Surely, dearie," replied the old woman.

At this moment the two were startled by a loud knock.

Dame Lindsay got up to answer the summons, but before she could cross the floor, the door was thrown violently open and Colonel de Crespigny strode into the room, looking pale, haggard, hurried, and at least thirty years older than when we saw him last.

CHAPTER XIV

DRIVEN TO DESPERATION

O, shut me nightly in a charnel house,
O'er covered quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeking shanks, and yellow, chapless skulls;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud—
Things that to hear them told have made me trem-
ble—

'And I will do them without fear or doubt
To live unstained.

SHAKESPEARE.

"I BEG your pardon for this sudden intrusion, but—I am suffering great—the greatest anxiety!" he began, casting his eyes around the room. "My ward has been missing since yesterday. Have you seen—have you heard——"

"She is safe, Colonel de Crespigny. She is quite safe. She is here," answered Dame Lindsay, leading the visitor around the headboard of the bed, that had hitherto hidden the recumbent girl from his sight.

"Gloria, my darling!" he exclaimed, as soon as his eyes fell upon her. "Heavens, what a fright you

have given us! What insufferable tortures of anxiety and suspense! And to find you here, and in bed, too! What does all this mean?" he demanded, turning in more displeasure than gratitude to the old dame.

"It means that the little lady, while trying to walk across the Rogue's Neck, was overtaken by the tide and swept off to sea, and was picked up by my Davie, who happened to be out with his boat, and who brought her here as to the nearest house," replied Dame Lindsay.

"What is all this that she tells me, Gloria?" inquired the shocked colonel.

"The truth, uncle! David Lindsay saved my life," said the girl, with a glow of gratitude and pride.

"A gallant deed, for which he shall be most liberally rewarded," said Colonel de Crespigny, as he sank into the chair that Dame Lindsay had silently placed for him at the side of the bed.

Gloria darted a glance full of scorn and indignation at this speech. It fell harmlessly on the colonel's unobservant head, and he repeated: "A gallant deed, truly, of the young fisherman, and he shall be munificently paid! But, my dear girl, how could you have been so imprudent as to cross the main alone? Did you not know there was great danger?"

"I did not care. I was weary of myself and everybody else! And now I am very glad I went, for David Lindsay saved my life," said Gloria, luxuriating over the words and the thought.

"I say it was a brave deed, for which he shall be munificently rewarded," repeated the colonel; "but still, my darling, I think that it was a pity your life should be risked for the sake of having it saved,

even by David Lindsay," he added, with a little sarcasm.

"I think not! The risk and pain are compensated by the memory left behind—a sweetness that will last me all my days," replied the girl, as a strange tenderness of joy melted and irradiated her face.

The colonel's brow grew dark. He did not speak for a few moments; when he did it was to say:

"My dear Gloria, we owe a deep debt of gratitude to this good woman and her son—or grandson, is he? But we must not trespass on their kind hospitality. I am sure you must be sufficiently recovered to rise and dress and return with me to the hall."

"Oh, no, sir, indeed she is not. She has been so shaken by her shock. Take an old 'oman's word for it, sir, she had better bide here a day or two," said Dame Lindsay, speaking earnestly for her guest.

"Indeed, uncle, she is right. I need to stay here where I am," added Gloria.

"Will you have the kindness to withdraw for a few moments and leave me alone with my ward? I have something to say to her in private," said Colonel de Crespigny, turning to the woman.

Dame Lindsay bent her head and went up into the little loft, and improved her time there by making David's bed.

"Gloria, my dearest, I could not speak freely to you in the presence of your humble hostess——" began the colonel; but the willful girl impatiently interrupted him.

"'Humble hostess,' uncle? Why should Dame Lindsay be called 'humble,' indeed? I call her my honored hostess, in my own thoughts."

"Well, well, my little girl, call her what you will. I shall not differ with you. But, my dear, I was about to say that it is not fitting or proper that you should remain here any longer."

"Why is it not fitting or proper, uncle?"

"Because this is the house of a young laboring man, and while you are here you are his visitor."

"But I am his grandmother's guest," persisted Gloria.

"No, my child, no; the house is his, not his grandmother's. The position is unfit, improper, indelicate. I wonder you do not see that it is so!"

"No, I do not see it. But if any one sees it, that is enough. I cannot stay, of course. I will go home with you, uncle."

"That is right, Gloria. That is right, my dearest girl. I thank you, love, for your ready acquiescence in my views and compliance with my wishes. As for this young Lindsay, who is such a favorite *protégé* of yours—and deservedly so, I must admit—he shall be well paid for the service he has rendered you. I will send him a check for a thousand dollars to-morrow."

"Marcel!" exclaimed Gloria, lifting herself up and looking him straight in the face, "if you do such a thing as that I will never forgive you as long as I live in this world!"

"Gloria, what on earth do you mean? Have you gone crazy, child?"

"No, but I think you have!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean just what I say, Colonel de Crespigny! If you were to offer David Lindsay money for saving my life, I would never speak to you again as long as I should live on this earth!"

"But, my dear, unreasonable child, why should I not do so?"

"'Why?' I wonder you, a gentleman and a soldier, you, a De Crespigny, cannot see why?" said Gloria, harping a little upon his own words of a few minutes past.

"I cannot see; but if you or any one can, I should like to be informed of the reason," said the colonel, in the same spirit.

"Then I will tell you. Suppose it had fallen to your lot to rescue Dame Lindsay from drowning, and David Lindsay had offered you money, as much as he could afford, in payment of your services, what would you have thought? How would you have felt?"

"My dearest Gloria, the cases differ totally," exclaimed the colonel, with a flushed brow.

"They do not differ in one essential point, uncle, and you know it, and feel it now, if you neither knew nor felt it before. I will yield to your wishes and return home with you to-day. But you must not insult my preserver by offering him any sort of reward for saving me. You may thank him, for yourself and for me; but thank him as you would thank General Stuart, or Doctor Battis, or any other gentleman of your acquaintance, had either of them rendered me the same inestimable service."

"My dear, absurd child, I do thank him more than tongue can tell. I think the most practical way of expressing my thanks would be to send him a check for a round sum; but if you prefer that I should take off my hat to him instead, why, I will do that."

"Yes, do that. Take off your hat to him. And, now please to go to the foot of the stairs there and call Granny Lindsay down. She will get cold if she

stays up in that fireless loft any longer," said Gloria, who had been anxious all this time on account of her old friend.

"Mrs. Lindsay, Miss de la Vera would like to see you," said Colonel de Crespigny, from the foot of the ladder.

"Ay, sir, I will come down," answered the dame, and she immediately descended.

"Granny Lindsay, my uncle has convinced me that I ought to return home with him. I am very sorry to leave you, but I must go!" said Gloria, gently.

"Ah, well, dearie, I am sorry, too—but of course 'ee must be guided by 'ee gardeen, little lady, and I hope 'ee'll take no harm. 'Ee clothes are all dry and ready for 'ee, and I'll wrap 'ee up warm and nice for 'ee little journey," said the dame.

"And now, uncle, you will please to withdraw! You see there is only this one room and we must take turns."

Colonel de Crespigny smiled good humoredly enough as he left the house to walk up and down in the crisp, cold winter air outside.

Dame Lindsay brought the girl's clothes from the chair over which they had been hanging near the fire.

"Granny Lindsay, where has David Lindsay gone?" inquired Gloria, as she arose and began to dress herself.

"Down to the shore to look after his boat, I reckon, lovie; or maybe he has crossed to the main to bring a load of brushwood."

"He hurried away as soon as I awoke and you came in."

"Yes, dearie, he did so to give you a chance to get up and dress, I reckon."

"Will he be back before I go?"

"I hope so, dearie."

Gloria slowly dressed herself, and then requested that her uncle might be called in.

Dame Lindsay, meanwhile, had placed coffee, hot rolls, and broiled ham on the breakfast table, and now she went to the door and summoned Colonel de Crespigny.

"I hope you will do us the pleasure to take a cup of coffee this Christmas morning, sir," said the dame, as she placed a chair at the table for her last visitor.

"Thanks, no; I took coffee before I left home this morning," answered the colonel.

But Gloria sat down and drank a little cup with her hostess.

Then, not to keep her guardian waiting longer than necessary, she arose, and put on her hat and sack to depart.

"Good-by, dear friend," she said, offering her cheek to the old dame's kiss. "Good-by. I shall never forget your motherly kindness to me. And please to say good-by for me to David Lindsay, and tell him that I shall hold my life sweeter from this day forth, because he saved it."

With this grateful and gracious message to her preserver, Gloria joined her uncle and left the cottage.

Involuntarily her eyes roamed all over the islet, in search of her old playmate; but in vain, for he was nowhere to be seen.

"Lean heavily on me, my child. You are pale and trembling," said De Crespigny, tenderly, as he

drew her hand under his arm and slackened his steps to accommodate them to her weary walk.

When they reached the shore, Gloria looked around again for some signs of David Lindsay's presence, but there was none to be seen, not even his little boat; and this was a certain indication that the dame's conjectures pointed to the truth, and that the young fisherman had crossed to the main.

With a sigh Gloria gave up the hope she had cherished of seeing and thanking him in person before leaving the island.

Colonel de Crespigny's boat was waiting, and Laban, who had seen them coming, and joyfully recognized Gloria, was laying on the oars.

"Come, my dear," said the colonel, as he handed his ward to her seat in the stern; "come, make yourself comfortable. Double your sack over your chest. It is a splendid day for late December, but the air is rather keen on the water."

"Oh, Miss Glo'! I's so glad you's safe!" cried Laban, grinning from ear to ear. "'Deed we dem over to the house is been almos' crazy 'bout yer ebber since las' night, when yer didn't come home to dinner. And me and Marse Colonel Discrepancy beatin' de main woods all night long! All de blessed, live-long Christmas Ebe night! And took Fiddle 'long of us and made her smell some o' yer close, and didn't she take a round-about ramble t'rough dem woods?"

"Did you hunt for me all last night, Marcel, dear?" inquired Gloria, with more tenderness than she had shown him for many weeks.

"Yes, my child. Did you suppose, Gloria, that I could have rested one moment, anywhere, from the hour that you were missed until you were found?"

It was at dinner that, on your non-appearance, I inquired of your maid why you did not come, and was told that you had been gone all day to the main, and had not returned. I had no thought but that you had lost yourself in the woods, and so I set out at once, with Laban here and your little dog Fidelle, and lanterns. The tide was low when we crossed the Neck. The little animal soon struck your trail, and convinced me that I was right. You have been told how she kept us wandering around in a circle all night. In the morning, as a forlorn hope, we returned to the Promontory, took the boat and came to the island to make inquiries."

"Oh! Marcel, dear, I never realized before how much distress my imprudence caused you," said Gloria, penitently, as she now for the first time observed the ravages that one night's intense anxiety had wrought in the man's face.

"Yer better beliebe it den, Miss Glo'!" spoke up Laban. "Ef my head hadn't been gray long afore dis, last night's doings would a turned it! And dere's 'Phia, gone to bed long of a sick headache, and 'Mia in de high-strikes."

While this conversation was going on they were rapidly passing over the water between Sandy Isle and the Promontory.

With Laban's last words, the boat grounded on the beach below the sea-wall, and the boatman drew in his oars.

"Go on to the house as fast as you can, Laban, and relieve the anxiety of your fellow-servants, so that they may be in a condition to attend Miss Davero when we get home," said Colonel de Crespigny, as he handed his ward from the boat.

The man very gladly obeyed, and ran on before them so rapidly that he was soon out of sight.

Colonel de Crespigny found himself alone with his ward for the first time (with the exception of the few minutes they had talked together in the little island cot, whose very walls had ears).

He drew her hand within his arm, and supporting her carefully, walked slowly on through that boat-house built in the sea-wall, and then up through the fields and ornamented grounds that lay between it and the hall.

"Gloria, my beloved, can you really estimate all I have suffered during your unexpected absence?" he inquired, as he pressed the hand that rested on his arm.

"Yes, uncle, I think I can. I am very sorry. I was not worth so much anxiety, uncle, dear."

"Do not call me uncle! I cannot bear to hear you call me so!" he burst forth with such energy that the girl shrank from him, and shuddered through all her frame.

"Gloria! Do you not understand me? Will you never understand me? Child, I can smother my feelings no longer! I have tried to keep silence, but I cannot! Twenty-four hours of agony have overcome my last power—self-control! Oh, my love, I love you! I love you!" he cried, stopping suddenly and facing her.

"Uncle!—for Heaven's sake, uncle!" she exclaimed, in deadly terror.

"Do not call me by that name unless you would drive me mad! I am not the least kin to you! I thank the Lord I am not your uncle; for I must be—your husband! There, it is spoken! I love you, Gloria, with a love that has broken down every bar-

rier of prudence, self-control, expediency, everything! I love you with a love that is my fate, and must be yours! For you must be my wife, Gloria!" he cried, clasping her hands in his and gazing on her with eyes that seemed to burn into her soul.

One amazed and terrified look she cast upon him, and then, with a half-suppressed cry, she broke away and fled!

CHAPTER XV

THE LAST RESORT

Me miserable! Which way shall I fly?

MILTON.

GLORIA fled towards the house, sped through the open door, rushed up the stairs, nor ever paused until she had reached her own chamber and locked herself within it.

There she sank down into her arm-chair to recover breath. Her heart was beating fast, her head reeling.

She seemed to herself on the point of swooning or dying, and she neither feared nor cared if this were her last hour on earth.

She only feared to hear again the revolting words that had just been breathed in her shuddering ears. She only cared to escape their repetition.

This, then, was the meaning of those fixed looks that had so thrilled her nerves and curdled her blood—Marcel de Crespigney wanted to marry her! Marcel, whom she always so loyally loved as her dear aunt's husband and widower, and as her own

uncle by marriage, now wished to make her his wife!

She shuddered, and covered her eyes with her hands, as if to shut out the vision of such a marriage.

But she could not shut out the vision of the beautiful, rather weak face that arose before her in all its pale, pathetic, appealing sadness. Those large, dark, melancholy eyes haunted her.

She could not rouse her soul to any anger against him. She loved him too well, as she had always done from her earliest infancy to this moment. She could not now remember the day when she had not loved him better than any one in the whole world. She loved him now as well as ever—as her uncle, her Marcel—but she loathed him as a suitor for her hand.

And withal she pitied him deeply.

“Poor Marcel!” she murmured to herself when she had grown a little calmer. “Poor Marcel! He has always sacrificed himself for the happiness of other people—even for auntie—and he has never had any happiness himself. And now he is losing his reason. He certainly is losing his reason, or he would never dream of such a mad act as marrying—Ugh! I will not think of it. What a misfortune. What can have caused it? His long, lonely life perhaps. And perhaps also, as he loves me so dearly, and he has no one else but me to love, he is afraid that I will do as other young ladies do—that is, some time or other, marry and leave him. Foolish old Marcel, to think that I would leave him for any one else! If he did but know me, he would know that I should never marry. But the more I think of it, the surer I feel that that is the reason of his

strange conduct. He loves me; he has no one left but me, and he fears that I will leave him, and so he wants to marry me just to prevent my going, and to insure my staying with him as long as he lives. But, oh, what an alternative!" she added, with a shudder.

She was, however, growing calmer, having found, as she supposed, a solution of the whole difficulty.

"Now," she continued her mental argument, "when Marcel is made to understand that I will never leave him so long as he lives, and never even wish to leave him, but will remain with him, and be perfectly happy with him, in devoting myself entirely to his service, as the most loving and dutiful daughter or niece could do, then, of course, he will be perfectly satisfied."

The ringing of the first dinner-bell aroused her from her reverie.

"Poor Marcel!" she said to herself. "I dare say he thinks now that he has frightened and offended me so thoroughly that I will not go down and join him at dinner, even on this Christmas-day! And indeed he did more than frighten me—he shocked me so awfully that I am sure I could never bear to look on his poor, wretched face again, if I had not found a way to cure him of his madness, and make him contented—a way that will not require any self-sacrifice on my part either, for I never dreamed of marrying and leaving him. I never liked the idea of marrying. The most unhappy people I ever saw in my life were married people—my aunt and uncle—and the happiest people I ever knew were the unmarried. No! I will never marry and leave my uncle! And when I make him understand this, he

will renounce his foolish and sacrilegious mania and rest contented with the company of his niece."

While turning these thoughts over in her mind, she was examining the contents of her wardrobe to select a dress suitable to the occasion.

Gloria de la Vera had always dressed in a style too old for her early youth and bright beauty. The reason was perhaps that she saw only elderly or aged people.

Now, for this Christmas *tête-à-tête* dinner with her uncle, she wore a dark blue moiré antique, with low neck and short sleeves richly trimmed with old point lace. Her ornaments were heirlooms of her father's family—earrings, necklace and bracelets of pearls set in diamonds. Her rippling golden hair was carried back from her forehead and gathered into a shower of ringlets that fell over a low comb from the top of her head to her graceful shoulders.

As the second bell rang, she opened the door and descended to the drawing-room.

Meanwhile Marcel de Crespigny had returned to the house, entered the privacy of his library, and banged the door to, angrily, behind him.

And there he had spent some hours striding up and down the floor and calling down maledictions on his own head for his want of patience and self-control.

In the midst of his confusion the sound of the first dinner-bell smote his ears.

He did not attend to its warning to go and make his toilet, but continued to walk up and down the floor, breathing imprecations upon his own folly, until the more imperative clangor of the second bell summoned him.

"And now," he said, "I suppose I have so offended

and estranged her as to drive her away from the table so that I shall have to dine alone on Christmas-day! Well, it will serve me right if I do!"

And with another malediction upon his "madness," he left the study and walked slowly and sadly into the dining-room.

How great was his surprise and pleasure to see his beloved Gloria standing with her hand upon the back of her chair, at the head of the table.

He noticed, too, that she was carefully and beautifully dressed—though, with her *moiré antique*, old point lace and diamonds, more in the style of a middle-aged matron than a very youthful maiden.

She was looking happy, too—a circumstance which he misunderstood and misinterpreted in his own favor, for he could not know what had been passing in her own mind, or that her content was founded on the faith that she had discovered a perfect solution for the difficulty in which she had previously found herself.

If the servant had not been present he would have expressed his contrition for having frightened her, and his delight in meeting her again, but there stood Laban, in his best holiday dress, a suit of fine black broadcloth, swallow-tailed coat and continuations, black satin vest and spotless linen, exhibiting at once the self-consciousness of a dandy and the solemnity of a bishop, and looking disapprobation on his shabby and rusty master, who had made no toilet in honor of the Christmas dinner.

The young lady of the house took no notice of the colonel's neglect; yet it was to her he spoke, of course, when he said:

"I owe you an apology, my dear, for appearing before you in this style, but really——"

"Never mind, uncle, dear. We are alone, so what does it matter? Who has a better right to appear in comfortable dishabille at his own table than you have?" she brightly inquired, thinking at the same time of the graver apology he owed her for a heavier offence.

He naturally misinterpreted her good humor, and rewarded it with a smile of gratitude.

Though they were but two, the dinner was a protracted one, for there were many courses, and the family cook would have felt enraged if every one of them had not been honored.

And old Laban—a cross between a bishop and a dandy—waited with solemnity and self-conceit.

At length it was over, and they adjourned to the drawing-room.

"Shall I play Luther's Christmas hymn for you, uncle, dear?" inquired Gloria, as she seated herself before the piano.

"Yes, love, thank you, play that, but no more; for I wish to talk with you and settle something before I can take any interest in anything else," he replied.

Gloria sat down and played and sang with all her usual feeling, spirit and charm.

When she had finished her hymn, she arose and went to the fire and seated herself beside her guardian; for she also wished to talk to him, and "settle something" which she believed would content them both.

Colonel de Crespigny was the first to speak.

"I was too sudden with you this morning, dear. I did not stop to consider how your nerves had been shaken by the frightful accident of yesterday, and so I startled you by a too abrupt disclosure of my feelings." He paused a moment, and then added:

"I beg you to forgive my want of consideration, dear child, and to let me hope——" He paused again, and she took his hand and said kindly:

"Say no more about it, uncle, dear. I understand—I understand—and I have something to reply, presently."

"You understand, and yet you call me uncle!" he said, wincing.

"It was a slip of the tongue, Marcel, dear. A mere matter of habit. I will learn to call you anything you please, so that I may make you happy," she answered, affectionately.

"And you will let me hope—you will let me hope—that some day, not far off, you will give yourself to me entirely; you will be my own, my precious, my pearl beyond price, my best gift of God—MY WIFE?" he breathed, in low, deep, intense tones, while his whole dark face grew radiant with happiness. He took her hand and gazed into her eyes. She drew her hand away, averted her head and shrank from him.

"My timid one, what are you afraid of?" he tenderly inquired, drawing nearer to her, and attempting gently to steal his arm around her waist, for he still fatally misunderstood her.

"Don't, uncle, don't! This is madness! This is sacrilege!" she exclaimed, withdrawing herself from his gentle caress. "I am not timid, uncle; but don't do that again, or you will drive me out of your sight forever," she added, as she walked away to a distant window, and stood there, pale and trembling, looking out, but seeing nothing.

Marcel de Crespigny remained where she had left him, leaning back into his chair, with his eyes fixed upon the fire—like hers, seeing nothing.

He did not attempt to follow her to apologize or explain. He was sorely perplexed.

After a few moments, when she had had time to compose herself, she came back to her seat and said:

"When I ran away from you this morning, I was too much shocked and distracted to understand anything rightly, or to know what to do. But after I had come to myself I began to reflect, and, at length, I comprehended——" She paused, as if to think a little longer.

"Yes, dear; I know, I know. I will give you time. I will be very patient," he replied, very gently and contentedly, for he still widely misinterpreted her. She did not know that he did so misinterpret her, and thus they were unconsciously at cross-purposes.

"And," slowly continued the girl, "as soon as I comprehended, I resolved to come to you and tell you something that I have determined upon, and which I think will harmonize our lives, and make us both happy."

"Yes, love, yes, speak freely, speak plainly!" he breathed hardly, suppressing every impulse to draw nearer to her, or to touch her hand that hung so near his, over the arm of her chair.

"Well, then, Marcel, dear—oh! it is difficult to speak of marriage, even negatively, as I shall!—but, Marcel, I know you have been thinking that some day I might, as other young folks do, marry and leave my home for another; and so, to prevent me from doing that, you dreamed of the impossible plan you proposed to me——"

"'Impossible,' Gloria?" he repeated, as his happy face gloomed and darkened.

"Yes, 'impossible,' because insane, profane, sacrilegious! Oh, I cannot bear to think of it! Do not compel me to think of it—even negatively—after this!"

"Gloria!" he cried, in a tone of pain and reproach.

"Hear me out, dear Marcel! for indeed I mean to reassure you! Listen, then! Since you love me so well that you would even marry me—ugh!—rather than lose me, hear me promise, Marcel, that you shall never lose me. I will never, never, never leave you to marry any one at all! I will stay with you and be your own faithful, affectionate, devoted niece, loving you as if I were your daughter—loving and serving you as my dear uncle, and even as if you were my own father! Now, Marcel, I promise to do this on the word of a *de la Vera*, whose very name is Truth! if only you would give up this mad and sacrilegious idea of me, which, of course, I know you will readily do."

"And is this your plan for 'harmonizing our lives' and making me happy?" he groaned, with such a look of anguish that Gloria could not endure it. With a low cry of pain she averted her face.

"But, child, I will not torture you, as I see I am doing now. Time and patience—time and patience work wonders. I must wait and hope—wait and hope," he breathed, with the reiteration of misery.

She arose and stood behind him, and with her hand on the back of his chair, murmured:

"Marcel, I am not angry, but I am very, very unhappy. I must go now and stay by myself a little while."

"Go, then, Gloria! Go!" he moaned, without turning to look at her.

Gloria fled to her own room; but even there the agonized face she had left behind followed her, haunted her, and tormented her.

Then she dressed herself in her seal jacket and hat and went out, and walked up and down under the cold starlight of the Christmas night until she was so weary that she could walk no longer.

Finally she returned to the house and retired to bed without again seeing her guardian.

The terrible mental trials of the days and weeks that followed, surpass all powers of description.

The deep, devoted, constant love of Marcel de Crespigny for the beautiful child he called his ward, had been fanned by opposition and fear of disappointment into an intense and insane passion. He lost all patience, all self-control; he could no longer refrain from pleading with her or caressing her, even when he saw that his words and actions inflicted tortures unendurable upon the gentle and sensitive soul.

And Gloria, she suffered with a subtle anguish, difficult to analyze, impossible to describe. As his niece and child, she loved and pitied her uncle, with all her young, compassionate heart, even as she had loved and pitied him from her earliest infancy up to present girlhood. But with her Christian faith and training she believed his suit to her to be most sinful and sacrilegious, and she shrank from it in horror and loathing unspeakable and indescribable. Yet, whenever she betrayed these emotions of fear and abhorrence, the look of utter misery they would call up on his face would cause a momentary revulsion of feeling in her, melting her heart to tenderness and sympathy.

He would be quick to see this change and gather hope from it.

Sometimes during the day, when her pity for him almost broke her own heart, she would be on the verge of sacrificing all her future life, her religious principles, her very soul's salvation, only to give him happiness, to drive away the look of misery from his face, and see him smile again.

Sometimes at night she would dream that she had really done this, that she had become her uncle's wife. Then she would awake with a cry of terror and rejoice that it was but a dream. At other times she would not wake so soon, but would dream on of being married to her uncle, and horrified by her position and trying to run away to hide herself, to drown herself, to do anything rather than to fall into his hands, or be compelled to live with him as her husband, and so she would moan and sigh in her troubled sleep throughout the night, and wake at last prostrated, depressed and miserable, with the thought that all too probably, in some weak moment when pity should be in the ascendant, this hideous dream might become a more hideous reality.

She had no refuge in her wretchedness, no mother, sister or friend to whom she could confide her troubles. She could not even go away from her guardian or from Promontory Hall. She had no protector in the world but him, no home on earth but his house. Besides, he was her lawful guardian, and had a guardian's power over her—if, indeed, he ever should choose to exercise it against her will, as he never yet had done, and as she was sure he never would do. But this power would last until she should become of age, or until she should marry; for by the terms of her father's will, her bondage as

a ward was to terminate with her majority or her marriage. Thus she had no refuge from the guardian who never sought to coerce her inclinations in any way, but through her affections, through her love, sympathy and compassion, had gained an ever-increasing and most fatal power over her.

More and more dangerous grew her position as days and weeks went by. Every day she was weaker, looking on her lover's despair. Every night her dreams were more terrible in their likeness to reality. To prove the degree to which her brain and nervous system were becoming affected, she began to be confused by dreams within dreams—in this way: She would dream that she awoke from a dream, and, waking, found that she was really married and miserable!

So utterly distracted was her mind that she could never be sure what was vision and what reality.

She felt herself falling into a despair that touched insanity, and inspired deadly horror of the ultimate results.

"I am sinking, day by day, deeper and deeper towards perdition! One of two things will happen to me. I shall go mad in this struggle—I shall go mad and drown myself—or else I shall marry Marcel and murder him! If I could only die decently before being driven to such extremity! Heaven help me and save me, for I cannot help or save myself!" she moaned, in utter anguish.

But the crisis was fast approaching.

It happened on a morning near the last of January.

The guardian and ward left the breakfast-room; he had his hand on the knob of the library-door, and she was on her way out for a walk, when he

called her, and begged her to come in and sit with him for a little while.

The meekness of this prayer moved her to grant the boon.

Without a word she turned and followed him into the library.

He threw himself, with a sigh, into his great leathern arm-chair, beside his writing-table. She drew forward a low ottoman and seated herself at his feet, as she had loved to do in the quiet, peaceful days they had spent together, just after her return home.

There was something now in his face and manner so broken, subdued, resigned, as to touch her deeply with tender compassion, and draw her into demonstrations of sympathy and affection that soon deprived him of all self-control. Before he was aware, he reached down his hands, caught her up in his arms, strained her to his bosom, and pressed passionate kisses upon eyes, cheeks and lips, while speechless, breathless, she struggled and fluttered like a captured bird, until, at length, she broke away and fled from him.

He sat where she had left him, grieved and angered with himself for having shocked and distressed her whom he loved better than his own life; he cursed himself and his weakness and his folly as he had never done before! He resolved that henceforth he would put such a guard upon himself as never to offend her again, by word or look. He would not intrude upon her in any way; but when he should see her again he would humbly express his contrition and sorrow for having offended her, and would earnestly beg her forgiveness.

And she would forgive him; for, after all, what

great wrong had he done? Only kissed her against her will; kissed her rather roughly, perhaps, but that was because she resisted him. What great offence was in that? he asked himself. Had he not seen in the parlor games of forfeits played in many a country house—had he not seen young men “pick cherries,” as they called it—run after a young girl and catch and kiss her by force, if not against her will, and been punished only by a slap on the face, administered with a laugh?

“Gloria is too fastidious, too morbid,” he said to himself.

Yet somehow he could not so excuse himself to his own conscience. Gloria was pure, dainty and refined, and he was very culpable in his conduct toward her, his conscience told him.

Now he resolved that he would ask her pardon, and after obtaining it he would be more discreet and respectful in his manner towards her until his love and patience should win her to be his wife.

TOO LATE.

Marcel de Crespigny was never in his life again permitted to look on the face of Gloria de la Vera.

CHAPTER XVI

GLORIA'S RAGE

My drops of tears
I turn to sparks of fire.

SHAKESPEARE.

TERRIFIED and enraged beyond anything that she had ever experienced in all the days of her life,

offended and revolted beyond all hope of reconciliation, Gloria had fled from the presence of her guardian and sought the sanctity of her own room.

There she locked herself in, and sat down to recover her lost wits and breath.

She sat there, looking not like the glad little Glo' whom we first knew, and whose pulse was music and whose breath was song—no, she sat there, with her elbow on her knee and her chin in her hand, and her eyes fixed on vacancy, shrunk to half their size, gleaming with twice their fire, and glowing like live coals from the white ashes of her pale and angry face—she sat there like some grim little Sphinx or Nemesis brooding revenge and plotting ruin.

“I hate him now. I can never bear to look upon his face again!”—so ran her thoughts. “To dare to kiss me on my lips! Why, my own beloved father seldom kissed me except upon my brow. And David Lindsay, my old playmate and my preserver, who loves me so unselfishly—David Lindsay, as he knelt beside my bed, on the morning after he had saved my life, only lifted a curl of my hair and pressed it to his face, and when he saw me wake and look at him, he laid the tress down reverently, as if it were something almost too sacred to be touched. And he is a poor, uncultivated man. And to think that this gentleman, this officer, this Colonel de Crespigny, should have so forgotten his honor! This guardian should have so betrayed his trust as to seize and hold me powerless and kiss me on my lips in spite of all my struggles and distress! Oh, the meanness of the act! the meanness of the act! No, I can never trust him again. I can never bear to see his face again. I will not spend another day in

his house. But where, oh, where shall I fly? I have no place in the world to go to! Or, if I had, there is no place to which he would not follow me—not to compel my return, though as my guardian he could do that. But he would not; he would do even worse; he would so humble himself to me, would so plead with me, would look so heart-broken that he would be sure to prevail with me and coax me back. Oh, Heaven! oh, Heaven! if I cannot trust him, neither can I trust myself! I hate him, and I fear him, and yet I pity him and love him, too! And who knows but that in some moment of idiotic pity I may not consent to all he pleads for and contract this repulsive marriage? Then I should go mad and murder him, or kill myself. That is what I am afraid of. That gulf of black ruin! What shall I do? Oh, what shall I do? Where can I fly from him and from myself? Who will save me from myself and from him? Oh, WHAT shall I do?"

She leaned her head upon her hand and reflected intently for some minutes, but could think of no plan by which to escape.

Suddenly, without any volition of her own will, there flowed into her soul an inspiration. She started and raised her head as one listening to a suggestion. Her cheeks flushed and paled, and flushed again, and her eyes brightened as she arose and exclaimed:

"Yes, I will! I will do it! I will marry David Lindsay. I will put one pure, good, brave man between me and the Evil! I do not care though he is poor and rough. I know he is good and true, noble and honorable! No gentleman in the land is more so. I can trust David Lindsay—trust him

utterly. He would never kiss me against my will—never wound or offend me in any way. Yes, I will marry my old playmate, David Lindsay, and we will keep house in earnest as we used to do in fun. And then I shall be free—free as air—for I know that by the terms of my father's will, my guardian's power over me and my estate ceases on the day of my marriage. I know it, for I have often heard Aunt Agrippina say how thoughtless it was in my father to make such a proviso in his will. 'For suppose,' she would say, 'some fortune-hunter should marry the child, you have no power to prevent it, or to withhold her estates.' That is the way I found it out. And I am glad it is so, for now I can marry David Lindsay, and enrich dear Dame Lindsay, and let them take me to one of my own fine houses and live with me in comfort. Or David might go to Harvard or Yale, and get the college training he has so long aspired to, and leave Dame Lindsay to take care of me. I will do it at once!"

It is wonderful how swiftly the mind acts under excitement. This whole plan swept through the mind of Gloria in a few minutes succeeding the first inspiration of the idea.

She did not now hesitate for an instant. She dressed herself quickly, and in the best and warmest suit she possessed. I said that she always dressed in the style of an old woman rather than that of a young girl. Now she put on a black velvet suit, a seal-skin sack and hat. The hat was the only girlish article she wore. Finally she drew on her brown kid gloves, took her muff and started for the door. But before she opened it she remembered that she would need more personal effects than she wore; so she laid down her muff, drew off her gloves, and

went and found and packed a small Russian leather traveling-bag that had been her companion on her tour through Europe. This she hung upon her arm, then taking her muff, she left the room.

On reaching the landing at the foot of the stairs she found Lamia engaged in brightening the knobs of the parlor doors.

"Where is your master?" she inquired of the girl.

"In de library, a tearin' up and down de room like Old Black Sam was into him—beggin' yer pardon for sayin' ob sich things, Miss Glo'. Does you want me to go and tell him you'd like to see him 'fore you goes out?"

"No, not at all," replied the young lady.

"Well, where shall I say you is gone, if he ax me, Miss Glo'?"

"Tell him that I have gone to take a long walk, and he is not to wait dinner for me."

"And when shall I say you'll be back, Miss Glo'?"

"You needn't tell him when, for I don't know myself."

"Well, so as you gets back 'fore sun-down, I s'pose marse will be satisfied," said the unsuspecting girl, as she resumed her rubbing of the brass knob then under her hand.

Gloria then left the house to hasten on her mad errand.

She walked rapidly, like one still acting under a high pressure of excitement.

She reached the boat-house, which was no longer kept locked. She passed through it and went out upon the beach, for it was now low tide.

There she found a little boat that she had sometimes been in the habit of rowing, near the shore.

Now she got into it, put down her hand-bag and

her muff, unhooked the boat-chain and threw it ashore, took the oar and pushed the boat off the sands, then seated herself and rowed for the little sandy island. The water was perfectly smooth, and her arms were braced by a strange, tense resolve. She sped swiftly over the intervening half mile, and in ten minutes reached her destination. She drew in her oar, and using it as a pole, struck it into the sands and pushed the boat up on the beach.

Then she picked up her hand-bag and muff and sprang ashore.

For a moment she stood still, looking all around for a chance sight of David Lindsay; for maddened as she was at this moment, there was "method" enough in that "madness" to make her unwilling to go on to the cottage and meet the placid, steady, conscientious Dame Lindsay.

She soon descried the young fisherman. He was standing on the shore at some distance, bending over an upturned boat, engaged in repairing it. His position prevented him from seeing, and the sound of his own hammer from hearing her approach, of which he remained quite unconscious even when she stood by his side.

She had nerved herself for the trial before her, yet now it seemed as if all the blood had forsaken her extremities and curdled about her heart, so pallid was her face.

She stood for a moment at his side while he continued to hammer industriously at his work, quite unconscious of her presence, until she spoke to him in a low tone.

"David Lindsay."

He started, dropped his hammer, turned, took off his hat, and stood waiting her commands. He had

not seen her since the morning after he had saved her life, and now he was too much amazed at her sudden appearance on the isle to find any word by which to welcome her. He could merely wait for her to make known the object of her visit.

For some moments she too continued silent. It seemed to her that it must take her life to utter the words which she had come resolved to speak, and with which this story opened:

“David Lindsay, will you marry me?”

It is not necessary to go over any part of that scene already related. It must be still fresh in the minds of our readers.

Well might the young fisherman be struck dumb with amazement and terror; well might his half palsied tongue refuse to utter any word but her own name, and that in a tone of unbounded consternation; for must not the lovely girl and wealthy heiress have lost her reason before making a proposal of marriage to any man, least of all to him—the poor, uncultivated young laborer? And when he had heard all that she had to say, well might he groan forth, in tones of deepest sorrow:

“Miss de la Vera, it is you who are mad!”

“‘Mad!’ ‘Mad!’” she echoed, her face reflecting the dismay so plainly revealed on his own countenance. “‘Mad!’ Oh, indeed, perhaps I am! But, oh, David Lindsay, if I am mad, so much the more need have I of your protection! If I am mad, oh, my old playmate, marry the poor mad girl to take care of her, to save her from herself, to save her from something worse than madness! to save her from sin! from crime! from murder! from suicide!” she exclaimed, her vehemence and wild excitement increasing with every word.

"Great Heavens, Miss de la Vera! What has happened to drive you to this extremity?" cried the young man, turning deadly pale, in dread of he knew not what. "Tell me all! Everything, freely! You know that my heart is yours—my life is at your feet, to do your will with! You know that I would do anything on earth you wish me to do, unless it would be to do you any wrong. Now you plead with me to do that which would make this world a paradise to me, unless it should make it a purgatory to you. Now tell me all. But first sit down. You are trembling so that you can scarcely stand," he added, as he threw off his pea-jacket, folded it and laid it on the overturned boat, to make her a comfortable seat.

She sank down, mechanically, too absorbed in the subject of her thoughts to notice how he had exposed himself to the cold for her convenience.

That she might speak with the less embarrassment, he stood a little behind her. And then, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, she told him all! And she ended with these words—fearful words for her to speak and for her old playmate to hear:

"And, oh, David Lindsay! you know how I always loved my uncle! loved him with the holy, tender, caressing love of a child for its father! And I love him so still! And I do pity him infinitely, because he suffers, and has always suffered so much! But, oh, when he wants to marry me, I hate him, oh, I hate him with the hate of a demon! I could kill him at such times! I could! I sometimes dream that I have married him and murdered him, and am flying from justice! or that I am in a condemned cell, or on the scaffold, and I wake in a cold sweat of terror and horror. And it may come

to this, David Lindsay! It may come to this unless you save me! I can trust you, my old playmate, I can trust you utterly! And to whom could I fly but to you? Who knows me so well as you? To whom am I so well known? Whom have I on earth but you, David Lindsay? Do not stand behind me! Come around here and let me see you," she concluded, slightly turning her head.

"God forgive me if I do wrong! God forgive me if this great temptation blinds me to the right!" murmured the young man as he left his position behind her seat.

And then—not because she was a high-born heiress stooping to him, a poor fisherman—no, indeed, for there was nothing abject in David Lindsay's nature; but because she was a young girl driven to humiliation as unprecedented as it was undeserved—he came and humbled himself before her, sank on his knees at her feet, took her hand, bowed his forehead upon it and said:

"See me here at your bidding. I am your own, your slave, to do your will in everything. Tell me what to do!"

"Oh, David Lindsay, rise and sit beside me," she murmured, with the tears springing to her eyes.

He obeyed her and waited for her further words.

"Take me away from here at once, David Lindsay! Take me to Washington, where we can be married. Then to my own house of Gryphynshold! There I shall be safe! You know where that is?"

"In Virginia—yes."

"Take me there, and from that place communicate with my guardian, who must then come to a settlement and yield up all authority over me, or

my estate; for such were the terms of my father's will."

"The steamboat from Norfolk to Washington will stop at La Compte's Landing this afternoon. If we cross about now we will be sure to meet it," said the young man.

"Then go and get ready for your journey at once, David Lindsay. I will sit here and wait for you. But what will Granny Lindsay say to your sudden departure? And, oh, what will she do, here by herself? I never thought of that before," said the girl, compunctiously.

"Do not distress yourself, lady. All things work together for your will to-day; for this morning my grandmother left home for the first time in many years, and for an absence of some days," replied the young man.

"Granny Lindsay from home!" exclaimed Gloria, in surprise, not unmixed with a feeling of relief.

"Yes, she is gone to St. Inigoes to keep house for the brethren until they can procure another house-keeper in place of the one recently deceased. You know they will not take one under sixty years of age," added David, gravely.

"Oh, I am so glad she will not be left alone here!" exclaimed Gloria.

"Come up to the house, then, will you not, and rest in granny's room, while I go in my roost and make ready?"

Gloria silently arose and followed him.

When they entered the neat room, David placed a chair for his young guest, then put the brands of fire together on the hearth, kindled them to a blaze, and hung the tea-kettle over it.

"Why do you take that trouble?" she inquired.

"You must have a cup of tea before you go. It will not take any extra time, since the kettle will come to a boil while I am getting ready," he replied, as he went up the ladder stairs that led through the trap-door to his own loft.

Gloria heard him walking to and fro, as he made his preparations for the unexpected journey. She, on her part, could not sit still. She felt as if she were in one of her nightmare dreams from which she could not wake. And again she felt as if she were going mad.

A sweet, homely household sound aroused her from this morbid mood. It was the singing of the tea-kettle over the fire. A happy thought came to her. She would play housewife for David Lindsay this once before leaving the cottage. She had spent days enough in the little place to know where all the stores were kept.

So she went first to the corner cupboard with the glass door, and opened it and found the little black tea-pot and the tin tea-cannister, and made the tea and set it to draw.

Then she drew out the little red-stained pine table, found the white cloth and the buck-handled knives and forks and the plated spoons in the drawer, and arranged them, then took the cups and saucers and plates from the corner cupboard, and finally she went out to the "safe" in the shed, to which in her childhood's days she had so often followed Dame Lindsay, and found bread, butter, milk and cold meat, all of which she brought and put upon the table.

When her self-assumed task was completed, she sat down to wait, but felt too restless to sit long. Soon she arose and began to pace up and down the

floor, when David Lindsay descended the ladder stairs, equipped for his journey, and carrying a large, black oil-skin bag in his hand.

"Ah! why did you weary yourself with this work, lady? I should soon have done it for you," he said, as he glanced at the completed preparations for a meal.

"Well, I wanted to do it. It is not the first time I have set the table for you and me, is it, David Lindsay? Don't you remember our little dinners, cooked with a driftwood fire on the beach? Don't you remember the flat stone we used to have for a table, and the crash towel for a tablecloth?"

"Do I not?" he asked, as a warm smile irradiated his face. This was the first time she had seen him smile since her sudden appearance on the island.

"Come and sit down, then, and I will pour out the tea."

They placed themselves at the table, upon which she had already set the tea-pot. They made some pretence of eating and drinking, and then Gloria inquired:

"Have we time to put everything in order before we go?"

"Oh, yes," responded the young man, "quite time enough."

And together they went to work and cleared away the table, and washed and replaced the dishes.

Next they took all the meat and bread and fish that was in the house and put it out in the shed, so that Priscilla and Nicholas, the cat and dog, might have something to eat during the week of Granny Lindsay's absence.

Then David Lindsay covered up the fire, and

locked up the house, all except the door by which they would go out.

"Ah! suppose Granny Lindsay should come back very soon?" said Gloria.

"She will not come back before I have time to write her a letter, inclosed in one to the priest, and telling them both all about our position," said David Lindsay.

"That is all, then. I believe I have no other anxiety," said Gloria, as they left the house together.

David Lindsay walked in advance, carrying his own large bag in one hand, and Gloria's little one in the other.

Gloria followed, with her hands in her muff, and so they reached the sands where she had landed.

"We shall have to use your boat, lady dear, since mine lies bottom upward on the beach, waiting for repairs," he said, as he placed the two bags in the skiff and handed his companion to a seat in the stern.

"It is uncle's boat; but we can send it back by a man from La Compte's Landing," replied Gloria, as her escort took the oars and laid himself stoutly to them.

They first crossed the water to a landing on the main opposite the little island. David Lindsay pushed the boat up on the sands, and beckoned to an old negro man who was seen standing in the open door of his hut, and commissioned him or his wife to go across to the island every day to attend to the needs of Winny, the cow, and to the pig and the poultry; and gave them the use of all the milk and eggs until Dame Lindsay's return.

Then he pushed off and rowed away from the place.

La Compté's Landing lay two miles down the coast, and it took a half hour's hard rowing to reach its wharf and boat-house on the sands. Above these the land, covered with a thicket of trees, rose abruptly for several hundred feet. From the midst of the trees on the summit might be seen the chimneys and peaked roof of La Compté's Lodge, and, farther down, the steeple of St. Luke's church.

"This is my place also, David Lindsay, and it will soon be our place. But I would not live here. It is too near the Promontory," said Gloria, as they landed.

An old negro man stood by the flagstaff.

"Gwine to take de boat, sar?" he inquired of the young man.

"Yes," answered the latter.

Whereupon the negro ran up the red flag. That was the signal for the steamboat to stop for passengers.

"Dey's so few folks trabelin' by water dis 'clement season ob de year dat it 'most don't seem much use to 'ploy a flagman to come down yer twice a week to 'tend it. But dey do tell me, better come ten times for noffin dan to let one passenger be disappointed."

"But couldn't passengers hoist the flag for themselves?" inquired the young man.

"Dem as understood could; but it ain't ebery stranger as comes down here to take de boat what knows dey is got to raise de flag. An' 'less de flag is riz, de boat won't stop, when it ain't got nobody on board to land here. And now, young marse, de boat'll be here in a foo minutes."

"David, dear, come here, please," said Gloria, walking off to a little distance.

He followed her and she placed in his hand a well-filled pocket-book.

"What is this for?" he inquired.

"For our expenses. I forgot to hand it to you before; forgot even that it would be needed; but you had better take it now, before we go on the boat."

He flushed crimson to the very edge of his black hair, as he gave her back the pocket-book and said:

"No, lady, dear, I do not need it, indeed; I have saved something from years of labor, and I have plenty for our present needs."

It was now Gloria's time to blush.

"I beg your pardon, David Lindsay; I did not know, indeed I did not mean——"

But he interrupted her by lifting her gloved fingers to his lips, bowing over them, and leading her back to the wharf. Then he went to the old flagman, and, giving him some money, engaged his services to take back Colonel de Crespigny's boat to the Promontory pier, and leave it there.

By this time the steamer was seen puffing its way towards the wharf.

In a few minutes it drew alongside and stopped.

A plank was thrown across to them and the two passengers went on board.

A few minutes more, and the steamer was blowing her way up the bay for the mouth of the Potomac River.

"You shall never repent this if my life can help it, lady, dear—though it is for you 'a leap in the dark,' " whispered David Lindsay to the grave-faced

child that leaned upon his arm, as they stood alone together on the deck of the steamboat.

"No," said Gloria, "it is not a leap in the dark—it is a spring into liberty and light."

CHAPTER XVII

WED

'Tis sure some dream, some vision vain,
What I, the child of rank and wealth,
Am I the wretch that wears this chain?

G. M. L.

THE sky was gray, the wind high, and the sea rough, yet David and Gloria remained on deck. He had led her to a bench behind the wheel-house, and there they sat, partly sheltered from the blast.

As the old flagman had truly said, there were not many travelers by the steamboat at this inclement season of the year—only a few country tradesmen, picked up at different points along the shores of the bay, who were taking time by the forelock and going to the Northern cities to purchase their spring goods.

All these were total strangers to Gloria and David; and as they lounged or sauntered, talking politics or smoking pipes, to and fro from stem to stern, on the deck, they scarcely bestowed a glance upon the young pair, seated behind the wheel-house, who, indeed, kept themselves aloof from all their fellow-passengers, until the ringing of the tea-bell brought them all down together into the ill-lighted saloon.

Here Gloria found herself the only lady at the table, with a dozen or more men, officers and passengers all counted; but as the motion of the steamboat was now very rough, she took it for granted that all the other ladies who might be on board were confined to their berths by sea-sickness.

After tea the young couple returned to the deck, but found the weather too blustering for the girl; so they went again to the saloon, but found that the table had been cleared of the tea-service and the men had gathered about it in parties of four to play cards, smoke and drink; so finally they went to the companion-way leading below, and there David Lindsay bid Gloria good-night, for there was no admittance for him in the Ladies' Cabin.

When she reached this sanctuary she found that she was the only woman on board the steamer, with the exception of the stewardess.

This latter came to proffer her services to the young lady. She was a wonderfully tall, black and spare specimen of the negro race. A striped gown and a high turban added to her unusual altitude.

"'Ebenin, Miss. Well, as yer's de only lady here, yer kin hab fus' choice of dese here staterooms on each side de cabin," she said.

"Is there any difference?" inquired the girl with a smile.

"Some is double and some is single, and dem in de middle is straight, and next to de stairs is crooked."

"Well, you shall choose for me."

"Den I 'vise you to take a double one in de middle."

"Thanks," said Gloria. She did not then go into the selected stateroom, but she sat down in the

rocking-chair and put her feet to the fire in the stove.

"Reckon yer's gwine back to school in de city arter the Christmas holidays?" ventured the stewardess.

"No," replied the young lady.

"Den yer's gwine long your pappy to buy goods maybe?"

"No."

"To visit yer 'lations, den?"

"No."

"Well, what on de face ob de yeth is yer gwine for?" bluntly inquired the stewardess.

"On business," good-humoredly replied the girl.

"Oh!" said the woman.

There was silence for a few minutes, and then the woman began to murmur, partly to herself:

"Now, I wonder what business can call a young gal to town at this unlawful season ob de wintry wedder in a cold steamboat?"

As the young lady did not reply to this, the woman felt driven to say, more decidedly:

"You looks moughty youngish for de like ob sich, and I'd eben fink as yer ma or aunt would be goin' wid you; but is yer gwine to buy yer weddin' close?"

"Perhaps," said Gloria.

"Dere! I did guess it, arter all!" triumphantly exclaimed the woman.

Then, to stop further examination, Gloria determined to turn the tables by questioning the questioner.

"What is your name, auntie?" she hastened to inquire.

"Laweeny Long, dough dey do mostly call me Long Laweeny, 'cause, yer see, honey, I is ober six

feet tall, which can't be said for all the men, let alone wimmin. Lay-wee-ny Long, honey! One ob de La Compte colored ladies, honey, and been runnin' stewardess long o' Cappin Bright ebber since my mist'ess died."

"You are Lavinia, one of the La Compte colored people?" questioned Gloria, in surprise.

"Hi, what I tell yer? Yes, honey, one ob de La Compte colored ladies, I is. My mist'ess was Miss Eleano La Compte, what married a speckled foreigner, which he was a great man in his own country, too, I b'liebe! Howseber, he's dead, and so is she, and lef' one only darter an' heiress, my present young mist'ess, dough I hab nebber seed her—Miss Delia Werry."

"Miss de la Vera, do you mean?"

"Yes, honey, dat's zactly what I said. Miss Delia Werry. Does yer know her, honey?"

"Not very well," replied Gloria, with a smile. "At least, I may say with truth that I don't know much good of her."

"Now, look here, young gal!" wrathfully exclaimed Long Laweeny, "don't you go a back-bitin' my young mist'ess behind her back! Now, I tell yer good, don't you! She's my young mist'ess, she is, and what harm does you know of her, pray? Dere, now, what harm does you know of her?"

"I did not say that I knew any harm of her; and, moreover, if it will give you any satisfaction, auntie, I can tell you that I love Miss de la Vera very much, very much more than any one else in the world, I am afraid."

"Den I'm glad yer does. But what make yer say yer don't know no good o' she?" inquired the woman, doubtfully.

"Oh, I was jesting, you see, only jesting; for I have as much respect for Miss de la Vera as I have for myself."

"Den yer mus' know her right well?"

"No, I'm sure I don't, not half as well as I would like to know her. But now—you say you belong to the estate. How comes it then that you are here as stewardess on this steamboat?"

"Hi, honey, 'cause dere ain't been no use for me at de house since de 'stablishment was broked up, arter old Marse Cappin La Compte died, an' de young ladies went to Washington to lib long o' deir gardeen. Dat was about twenty years ago, honey. And all we young women servants what belonged to de house was hired out at wariuous places, and only two or free old grannies left to look arter it, dough all de men—field hands and fishermen and blacksmiths and carpenters, yer know, honey—was left on de 'state, 'cause deir work was to be done, whedder or no, fambily or no fambily."

"And have you been twenty years in this service?"

"No, honey, not quite. Only 'bout seben, I reckon. I was hired out at private service before that."

"Do you like this life?"

"I used to, honey, but I's gettin' tired of it. An' I's wishin' for the time to come when my young mist'ess, Miss Delia Werry, will come ob age or get married, so as to come and lib at home, an' hab her colored people about her like oder ladies, I do."

Gloria felt extremely interested in this old family servant of her ancestors whom she had so unexpectedly met in the cabin of the steamboat, and so, without revealing her own identity to the woman, she encouraged her to talk of La Compte's Landing

and the old people who had lived there in times past. And as "Long Laweeny" had so interested a listener she became very diffuse in her revelations.

"They do say, Miss, that the first founder ob de family in dese parts was a brave ole sea-king, what his inimies and back-biters called a booknear or pirate, and how he buried whole shiploads of gold and silver about dese here shores an' islands, which, if dat same treasure would be foun', it would make de people what owns de lan's as rich as Jews. But I don't know as to de trufe of it."

These and many other tales and legends of the old family did Long Laweeny relate to her attentive listener, and so whiled away the time until a late hour, when Gloria thanked the woman for the entertainment and retired to her state-room.

Though the mind of the girl was deeply disturbed by the novelty of her present position, and the uncertainty of her future fate, she did not lie long awake, but rocked by the motion of the boat, soon fell sound asleep and slept profoundly until she was awakened by the movements of the stewardess bustling about the cabin and setting it in order.

On first opening her eyes she felt surprise and fear on finding herself in the berth of a state-room on a rocking steamboat; but instantly she remembered the rash step that had placed her in this position, and her soul was filled with dismay. For a moment she repented her reckless flight, and contemplated remaining on the steamer under the protection of Long Laweeny, and returning with it on its next down voyage to her home. Only for a moment did she think of such an alternative to going on and completing her other purpose. The vision

of her uncle and his importunities frightened her from all idea of going back.

"No!" she said to herself, "I cannot trust him. I can trust David Lindsay."

In the spirit of this trust she met her old play-mate on deck.

He, too, had had his deep sleep of oblivion and his wakening to astonishment and perplexity. But no instant's doubt of his future course disturbed his mind; he was devoted to his lady's service, and determined to do her will. In this spirit of loyalty he received her on deck.

The wind had shifted to the northwest and cleared the sky of every cloud; but it was now blowing dead ahead, and so the boat had both wind and current against her, and her upward progress was slow.

Gloria and David had spent the day on deck, only leaving it to go to breakfast, dinner and supper in the saloon.

After supper they separated, as before, at the head of the companion-way leading down into the ladies' cabin, where Gloria spent the evening in drawing out Long Laweeny to talk of the old La Comptes until bed-time, when she retired to her berth. The same evening David spent in talking to the officer of the deck until the hour came which relieved the latter, and drew the former to the saloon state-room, which he shared with a country store-keeper.

It was sunset when she entered the mouth of the Potomac and near daylight when she reached Washington.

When Gloria awoke that morning the first thing that struck her was the stillness of the steamer,

and the next a small fleet of oyster-boats, a crowded wharf, and a row of dingy warehouses—all seen through the window of her state-room as soon as she slid back the shutter.

Then she dressed quickly, for she knew the boat was at Washington.

But again she was seized with that panic of dread which had temporarily overcome her on her awakening on the previous morning. Again she felt the impulse to fly from her purpose and return to her home while there was yet time. But the vision of her uncle in his madness arose before her mind's eye and checked her impulse.

"No, I cannot trust him! I cannot trust myself! but I can trust David Lindsay!" she said, as she completed her toilet, put her little personal effects into her traveling-bag, and went up on deck.

David Lindsay received her there and led her at once to the saloon, where the passengers were already at breakfast. She, being the only lady, received much attention. Her seat had been kept for her, and dainties were pressed upon her; but so troubled was her spirit at the prospect of her fate, that she could only swallow a little coffee and make a pretence of eating.

When the counterfeit meal was over, she arose from the table, bowed to her fellow-passengers, and left the saloon, attended by David Lindsay.

"We may go on shore at once. I had already engaged a carriage when you first came on deck," said the young man, as he led her across the gang-plank from the wharf, where the hack was waiting.

He handed her in, saw her comfortably seated, and followed and placed himself opposite to her.

"Where to, if you please, sir?" inquired the hack-

man, touching his hat, as he held the door open in his hand.

"Wait a moment," replied young Lindsay; and then he bent forward and whispered to Gloria:

"You have been here before, and know the place. What hotel do you prefer?"

"Uncle and I stopped at Brown's. It was good enough, I suppose. I know nothing about the others, except that some of them looked better on the outside," replied Gloria.

"Brown's Hotel," was the order the young man gave to the hack-driver, who remounted to his box and drove off.

David Lindsay had never been in any city in his life, and, therefore, he was much more pleased with his first sight of Washington than strangers usually are.

"There is the Capitol!" he exclaimed, looking out of the window on the east side. "I know it by the picture, which is very faithful," he added.

"Yes," replied Gloria, scarcely knowing what she said, so troubled was her spirit.

The youth looked at her wistfully, doubtfully, sorrowfully. Then he dropped his eyes and voice to the deepest expression of reverential tenderness, and said:

"Miss de la Vera, do you repent this trust you are about to repose in me? If you do, oh, speak! I am yours to do you service. To secure your happiness in any way I may be permitted to do so! To attend you all through life, if I may be so blessed—or, if not, to take you safely wherever you would go, and leave you forever, if this should be your will," he added, as his voice broke down with emotion.

She answered him by asking another question:

"David Lindsay, do you really love me—love me — as you said you did that morning after you saved my life, when you did not know I heard you? Say, do you really love me as much as you said then?" she breathed, in accents scarcely audible.

"Do I love you? How do I love you? How can I tell you! I have no words to tell you! But I know that I could live for you, work for you, suffer for you, yes, Heaven knows, I could give my body to be burned for you, if that could insure your welfare. And because I love you so much more than I can tell you, I repeat now that I am yours to do your will, whatever it may be; yours to attend you through life if I am to be so happy, or yours to take you to some place of safety wherever you would go, and leave you there forever, at your command. Dearest lady, you have only to command."

She was weeping heartily now.

He gently repeated his words:

"You have only to command."

"I cannot—command—anybody! Not even myself!" she sobbed.

"What shall I do to console you? Did I not hear that Madame de Crespigny, the colonel's old mother, was in Washington? Shall I inquire for her and take you there, and leave you under her protection?" he asked, turning pale at the thought of what her answer might be, though no other sign, not even a falter in his voice, betrayed his inward agitation.

"No!" exclaimed Gloria. "Take me there? Why, uncle would follow me. He would not compel me to return with him, but he would persuade me. Uncle masters my will when he pleads with me, and if I return to his power he may some time, in

some paroxysm of his own distress, in some moment of my own idiotic pity, induce me to become his wife, and then, when I should have done so, I should go mad, and kill him or myself. No—no—no! I must put an eternal barrier between uncle and myself. David Lindsay, I cannot trust my uncle. I cannot trust myself. I can only trust you. Say no more about taking me anywhere but before some minister of the gospel. And”—(“don’t make me do all the courting,” she was about to add, but some subtle intuition warned her that she must not turn her tragic situation into jest, even with her trusted and faithful friend.)

The carriage, meanwhile, had rolled on to Pennsylvania Avenue, and now it drew up before “Brown’s.”

“Tell him to drive to the Ladies’ Entrance,” whispered Gloria, who saw that she would have to prompt her untraveled escort.

The order was given and obeyed.

David handed his companion down to the pavement, and paid and discharged the carriage.

“Ask to be shown to the ladies’ parlor. I can remain there until you go and find some minister, and—yes, it will be necessary for you to get a license from the register’s office at the City Hall,” she continued, in a whisper, as they followed an obsequious waiter to an upper front drawing-room that overlooked the avenue.

Gloria threw herself into a chair. There happened to be no other occupants of the parlor, though people, either the inmates of the house or visitors, might enter at any time.

“Will you want rooms, sir? The office is below,” suggested the waiter.

David Lindsay hesitated and looked at Gloria, who murmured :

"No, do not take rooms yet. You would have to register our names, and that would be awkward just now. Wait until afterwards."

"We do not want rooms, but will take luncheon about noon," said the young man, turning to the waiter, who then left them and went about his business.

"How will you occupy yourself while I am gone?" inquired David Lindsay, uneasily.

"Oh, you needn't be away half an hour. I shall stand here and look out of the window," she answered, taking up her post.

The young man left the room.

She did not stand there long, for again some nameless horror of her position, and dread of consequences, seized upon her soul, and drove her to walking rapidly up and down the floor, muttering to herself :

"Was ever a wretched human being driven to such extremity as I am? Is there any way out of my trouble except through this strange marriage, and am I, all this time, so insane, as I suspect I am, that I cannot see it? Even David Lindsay proposed to take me to old Madame de Crespigny, and David Lindsay worships me, poor boy, that I know! But I cannot go to Madame de Crespigny! I cannot go anywhere where Marcel could follow me and subdue me by his pleadings, and draw me to my own destruction and to his! I cannot trust Marcel! I cannot trust myself! I can only trust David Lindsay! And he is no clown, if he is a poor fisherman! See how he has improved himself. He talks as well as uncle does, though he may not be able to speak

on so many different subjects. But, oh, Heaven, what is all this to the main question? That I should be obliged to marry any one to save myself from uncle and from my own heart! I don't want to marry! I don't! I don't! I don't! I never did wish to marry! I never meant to, either! But—if I must, I would rather trust David Lindsay than any one I know."

So, muttering to herself, she paced rapidly up and down the floor until the entrance of other ladies into this public parlor arrested her murmuring complaints, though not her steps, for she continued to walk about the floor, stopping only once in a while to look out of the windows.

Several of the occupants of the room noticed the pale, sorrowful, and restless "child," for such they took her to be, and formed their own theories of her distress. She was doubtless on her way to school, after her Christmas holidays, and was suffering from the separation from home and friends. But these people had their own affairs on their minds, and so could bestow but little attention on the troubles of the supposed homesick school-girl, whom they hoped to see presently taken care of by her parent, or guardian, or some other responsible person who had come with her as her escort.

For more than an hour Gloria walked restlessly about, or gazed from the front windows, while people came and went to and from the room, whose occupants were thus always changing.

Then at length David Lindsay returned. She drew him to a distant window, out of the hearing of all others, that he might give an account of himself.

"I was longer than you thought I should be, be-

cause I had to wait some time in the register's office before I could get our license. Afterwards I had to inquire out the residences of clergymen, and I called at several before I could find any one disengaged. At length I found one at leisure—the Rev. Mr. O'Halloran, at St. Matthew's church. He will meet us there immediately," whispered David Lindsay.

Gloria began to tremble visibly.

"Are you ready?" inquired the young man.

"Yes," she answered, in a tone scarcely above her breath.

He gave her his arm and led her forth, down the stairs and out of the house, to the carriage that stood waiting for them before the door.

In another moment they were bowling rapidly up the avenue and turning into a cross street. A ten minutes' drive brought them to old St. Matthew's. He helped her from the carriage and led her into the church, at whose lighted altar stood the priest in his vestments, attended by one or two sacristans.

In the front pew nearest the altar were three women at their devotions.

As these were not the hours of public worship, there were no other persons in the church. Gloria wondered to see these present, but was too much troubled with other thoughts to speak of the circumstance.

David Lindsay, however, voluntarily enlightened her.

"I told the priest, in answer to his questions, that we had no witnesses to bring with us. He then said that he would have to provide them. I suppose he has done so, and these are they," he whis-

pered, as he led his trembling companion up the aisle to the chancel.

Two hassocks had been placed on the floor before the altar railings. Upon these they knelt.

The priest opened his book and began the ceremony forthwith.

The women in the front pew left their seats and drew near enough to hear the low responses of the bridegroom and the bride.

The ceremony must have been relieved from all unnecessary forms, for it was very short, and very soon over.

"I pronounce you man and wife. Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

The concluding words of the sacred marriage-rites, uttered in the sweet and solemn tones of the officiating priest, fell upon the ears of the unhappy girl like the knell of doom.

The benediction was then pronounced, and the young pair arose from their knees.

CHAPTER XVIII

BRIDE AND GROOM

Wedded fast were we.

E. B. BROWNING.

"**SALUTE** your wife," said the priest.

The young bridegroom turned to his wife—his face all glorious with the noblest love that ever inspired the soul of a world-renowned poet or warrior—and took her hand and drew her to his heart and bowed his head to offer her the customary kiss that

was to seal the ceremony just performed between them.

She did not yield him her lips—she did not even leave him her hand, but shuddered and coldly withdrew herself.

David Lindsay turned deadly pale.

The priest and the witnesses looked surprised. Such an exhibition of unkindness, not to say rudeness, they had never seen in all their experience.

“Come into the vestry, if you please,” then said the priest.

David Lindsay, struck to the heart by his bride’s repulsion, recovered himself by an effort, drew her arm within his own and followed the clergyman.

The two sacristans and the three witnesses brought up the rear.

The parish register lay open on the table.

The newly married pair were now required to sign their names.

David Lindsay steadied himself and wrote his in clear characters.

Gloria’s hand shook so in her attempt to write that the scratches and blotches she made might have meant anything or nothing.

The witnesses affixed their signatures, and the deed was done.

Then David Lindsay courteously thanked the priest and shook hands with him, leaving in his palm a very liberal fee.

Finally, he drew the arm of his bride under his own to lead her forth.

As he led her down the aisle, on their way out of the church, some whispered words among the three women who had witnessed their marriage, and who now followed close behind them, fell on his ears.

"A runaway match, as sure as you are born, and the girl repents already. She looks like death, she does," said one woman.

"She's scared nearly out of her wits for fear her father or somebody will be after her," said another.

"I declare I don't know how any conscientious minister of the gospel ever can find it in his mind to marry a runaway couple—and such children as these are, too. I must say, I am astonished at Mr. O'Halloran!" added the third woman.

"Well, for my part," recommenced the first, "if one of my daughters should be so lost to all sense of propriety as to go off with any young man, I should be exceedingly thankful to the first minister, or even magistrate, who should tie them lawfully together."

"To be sure, there is something in that, which I never thought of before," answered the caviler.

David Lindsay drew his trembling companion on faster, in order to escape hearing any more of these unpleasant comments.

He took her out and put her in the carriage, stepped in, and seated himself by her side and ordered the hack to drive back to the hotel.

"Gloria, dear Gloria, my own dearest lady," he began, as he took one of her frozen hands.

"DON'T speak to me! DON'T touch me!" she exclaimed, snatching her hand from his gentle hold, pulling her veil over her face, and tucking her head down in a corner of the cushions.

"Ah! what have I done to offend you, lady?" he pleaded.

"BE SILENT, I say! And keep your hands to yourself, unless you wish to kill me! But you may do

that one thing! You may kill me, if you like! I wish you would!"

"Great Heaven! Gloria, what is the matter with you?"

"I am crazy! crazy! I told you I was crazy! And if you do not leave me alone I shall go raving mad!" she wildly exclaimed, and then pushed her head down in the cushions again, as if she would shut out all sight of earth and heaven.

David Lindsay sank back in his seat and turned deadly pale as he asked himself the question:

What had he done to offend and alienate her? To fill her mind with such abhorrence of himself? He had obeyed her in everything. He had consecrated his life to her happiness. True, she was a rich heiress, and he was but a poor boy; yet, if their cases had been reversed, and he had been the wealthy man and she the poor girl, he felt that he would equally have consecrated his life to her. He loved her with his whole being, and since she had condescended to him, he had hoped finally to become more worthy of her, and to win her love; for deep down in his soul he felt the prophecy that he should become worthy of her—

"Worthy as a king."

But ever since, at the priest's command, he had offered her the bridegroom's kiss, she had shrunk from him in loathing.

Was it possible after all, that the mind of his beloved was unbalanced? That her reason was deranged, and had been so at the time she had made her strange marriage proposal to him? Had he himself been culpably hasty, even criminally reck-

less, in his acceptance of her offered hand? Had he unconsciously taken advantage of a poor child's lunacy to make her his wife?

Indeed, the present aspect of affairs looked as if this must be the case. And if so, what earthly amends could he make her? How atone for the deep wrong he had done her?

These were terrible questions, that he could in no way answer.

While they still tortured his soul, the carriage drew up before the hotel, and the coachman left his seat on the box and came down and opened the door.

Gloria's face was still tucked down out of sight in the corner of the carriage.

"Come, lady, we have arrived," the young bridegroom whispered, in a gentle and deprecating tone.

She pulled her veil down closer over her face, doubling it so that not a feature could be seen, and then allowed him to take her hand and assist her from the carriage.

David Lindsay, in his distress, forgot to pay the hackman and discharge the hack. But that functionary jogged the memory of his employer and received his own dues.

Then young Lindsay led his companion into the house and up to the ladies' parlor, when she left his arm and hurried away by herself to a corner, where she sat down in a large chair and hid her head in its back cushions.

Meanwhile David Lindsay went down stairs and registered their names and engaged rooms.

When this was done he came back to the parlor, accompanied by a waiter with a couple of keys in his hand.

Leaving this man at the door, laden with the two

traveling-bags which had been pointed out, David Lindsay approached Gloria and whispered :

"A waiter is here to take up your bag and show you to your room. Will you go now, and will you have some tea, or whatever you prefer, sent up to you?"

She did not answer by one word, but, shuddering, arose, peeped through a fold of her veil, and, seeing the waiter at the door, walked towards him.

The man nodded, and led the way to a small suite of rooms on the same floor, consisting of a little parlor, chamber and bath-room.

He opened these and put down the bags, and then struck a match and set fire to the kindlings already piled in the grates ready for ignition.

Having performed these duties he turned to the lady and inquired :

"Any more orders, madam?"

"Madam!" echoed the girl, with bitter scorn, though in so low a tone that the word was nearly inaudible. "No, I want nothing; but, yes, you may bring me a cup of tea. My throat is as parched as a desert."

The waiter nodded and went out.

"Now, what have I done!" exclaimed Gloria, as she tore off her gloves, her hat, and her sack, and threw them angrily on the bed. "Now, what have I done! Oh, Marcel! I will never, never, no, NEVER forgive you for driving me to this pass! Oh! how I hate you! How I hate you for this, Marcel! And I hate David Lindsay! And I hate myself worse than all! My odious self! I hate everybody! And I wish everybody was dead! I do!" she cried, flinging herself down on the floor, and rolling and crying like a passionate child.

It is of no use to repeat all her ravings.

David Lindsay was more than half right in his surmises, and Gloria was really more than half insane.

She was still rolling and crying on the carpet, when the shuffling steps of the waiter approaching the door, caused her to start up in time to answer his knock.

She placed herself behind the door, opened it, put out her hand and took the little tea-tray, without showing her own tear-stained face.

She drank the tea with eager thirst, and then sat down the empty cup and threw herself on the sofa.

"The cup that cheers," and so forth, seemed to do her good, and perhaps her fit of hysterical weeping had temporarily exhausted itself, for she wept and raved no more, but lay, with her hands clasped over her face, in perfect stillness.

An hour later there was a knock at her door. She started up and opened it, and David Lindsay entered the room.

She recoiled to the farthest corner, and sat down and hid her head over the back of the chair.

"Do not shrink from me. Indeed I will not intrude my presence on you more than is absolutely necessary," he began, in low and deprecating tones.

But she shuddered and shrank into herself, more fearfully than ever.

He sat down at some little distance from her, sighed heavily, because he could not help doing so, drew out a handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his forehead, which was beaded with a cold moisture, and paler now than it had ever been in his life before.

"I only wished to discover, if indeed I can do so,

through you, whether you really knew what you were about when you came to me on the beach, when you accompanied me to the city here, and when you gave me your hand in the church?"

These words acted upon the motionless form with more power than a galvanic battery on a corpse.

She sprang from her seat to the middle of the floor and, confronting him with a wild and agonized face, she exclaimed:

"No, I did not know what I was doing! I was mad—mad—mad! and you ought to have known that I was mad to have done such an unheard-of thing. Oh, David Lindsay, if you ever loved me, have pity on me now and leave me! If you have a spark of mercy in your soul, grant my prayer, and leave me. If you have the least instinct of honor, do not insist on keeping the position that my act has given you. If you are a man and not a monster, and not a maniac, leave me and never let me see your face again."

He gazed on her in anguish and amazement. Then he arose from his chair, crossed over to the fireplace, and stood upon the corner of the hearth, with his elbow leaning on the mantel-shelf, and his hand supporting his forehead. His eyes were fixed upon the floor, his face was white as death, and looked older by a dozen years than it should be. Yet he was very firm and patient. Boy as he was—but a few months past his twenty-first birthday—he could never descend to the weakness of pleading his suit, and playing upon the sympathies of his beloved, as older and wiser men have done, and still do. No. If her love could not approve him, her pity should not accept him. He adored her with his whole soul. He had married her, yet he would

not persecute her with an unwelcome suit. But neither must he leave her now, in her childishness and helplessness. He must see her in some place of safety, and under some proper protection.

Such were the thoughts that passed rapidly through his mind, as he stood on the corner of the hearth, with his elbows resting on the mantel-piece, his head leaning on his hand, and his eyes fixed on the floor.

"David Lindsay, will you act the part of an honorable man, and leave me at once and forever, or will you stay here and drive me furious?" she demanded again, in a voice of anguish.

"Patience for one moment, lady. I will leave you—as far as the next room—and never cross this threshold again. This chamber shall be your sanctuary. I will occupy the parlor. But I cannot leave you alone and unprotected in a strange city, dear. I must be on hand to take care of you, if needful. You are frightened now, Gloria. There is no need to be. I will not intrude. But we must have time to think what we shall next do."

He spoke very gently.

And now she was weeping aloud.

He left the room at once.

"Oh! what a selfish and cruel wretch I am! What a change has come over me! I have turned into a demon! I must be a demon to hate those who love me! To hate them for loving me! Oh, I wish I were dead! I wish I had never lived!" she sobbed, throwing herself down upon the sofa in an agony of self-reproach and self-loathing.

David Lindsay walked up and down in the adjoining room, his steps noiseless on the soft carpet. He was sorely perplexed in mind and distressed at

heart, only certain of two obligations resting upon him—not to intrude on her privacy, yet not to desert her in her weakness and distraction. She was but a child, he felt, a child who had grown up under very peculiar circumstances, so that she must not be judged as ordinary children or young girls. And what a heavenly child she had been! How full of love, how free from selfishness! Now she seemed indeed to have been driven into a state akin to insanity. Had he, her old playmate, who loved her better than his own life, had any hand in this? He could not think so. He, with all his honesty of inquiry, could not see any other way than that they had taken to save her from an odious marriage, which her religious faith would have condemned even if her own heart had not revolted against it—a marriage into which she could not have been compelled, of course, but into which she might have been, through her pity, persuaded. Now she was safe, at least from that danger.

Meanwhile, what was now his duty to her?

Not to intrude on her, and not to abandon her, certainly.

But afterwards?

He now remembered all that she had told him, while they sat together on the steamboat deck, concerning her father's will, and how, on her attaining the age of eighteen, or on her marriage, she was to enter upon the possession of her estate, and the authority of her guardian was to cease; that this will had been made in Washington city, and recorded in the office of the Register of Wills.

He determined to go thither and examine the document for himself.

He rapped gently at Gloria's door.

"What do you want?" she inquired, in smothered tones.

"I am going out for an hour. Shall I send any one to you?"

"No, thanks; I want nothing."

He turned away and went down stairs and out of the house, and bent his steps to the City Hall.

On inquiring of the proper officers he obtained a view of the folio containing the record of the testament he sought. Having read it over, he thought he saw his way clearly enough towards placing his young bride in her own house, surrounded by her own servants, and safe from any annoyance from her late guardian. But he concluded that it would be better to take a lawyer's opinion.

He had noticed, as he came along that morning, almost every front basement on the north side of Louisiana Avenue, opposite the City Hall, to be the office of some attorney-at-law.

He therefore knew where to go to look for one.

He left the building and crossed the street, but went into at least a dozen places without finding any one disengaged. At length, however, he paused before the last and plainest on the block, which bore the sign: "Patrick McLoughlin, Attorney and Counsellor at Law."

He entered a shabby little room, where a very young and briefless lawyer sat at a dusty desk, and seemed to have no heavier labor on hand than the perusal of the morning paper.

To this young fellow David Lindsay introduced himself, and stated his case, omitting only two circumstances—that the marriage proposal had come from the lady herself, and that immediately after the ceremony she had repulsed him. The knowledge

of these unusual facts was, however, not at all essential to the right understanding of the situation.

The young Irishman, with all the ardor and frankness of his race, heartily congratulated his client on having so successfully run away with an heiress; for that was the light in which he viewed the affair. He made no pretense of being busy, but announced himself ready to attend Mr. Lindsay at once. They crossed over together to the City Hall, and went to the Registrar's office, where McLoughlin read the recorded will, while David Lindsay stood by. Then he closed the folio with a rap, clapped his client on the shoulder, and exclaimed:

"That's all right! Take the lady home to the finest house she possesses, my dear fellow, and tell the old guardian, if he comes bothering around, to go to the divil; his consent was not necessary!"

Not very elegant language to couch a lawyer's opinion in; but McLoughlin has improved since then, and now you would hardly find a more dignified man at the Washington bar than he is.

The young lawyer thought he had found a "big bonanza" in this fortunate young fellow, who had married an heiress, and so he charged him fifty dollars for his advice. (He would charge five hundred for the same service now, bless you.)

David Lindsay paid the fee without demur; but he was appalled, it reduced his funds so alarmingly low. He had left home with only two hundred dollars—the accumulated savings of ten or twelve years. Traveling expenses, and clergymen's and lawyer's fees had reduced it to less than a hundred already, and this circumstance warned him that he must lose no time in stopping expenses at the hotel,

but must take Gloria to her home, while yet he had the means of doing so—for he was resolved that he would not draw upon her resources.

He took leave of young McLoughlin and walked rapidly towards their hotel.

He went up stairs to their private parlor and rapped at her door.

"Well?" she said, in a subdued voice.

"Will you come out, dear, and let me speak to you?"

"Yes," she murmured, in a low tone; and presently she appeared, closed the door behind her, and sat down on the nearest chair. She did not wait for him to speak, but, with a dry sob, commenced:

"David Lindsay, I am a lost spirit—an evil spirit. I cannot help that. I have treated you unpardonably. I cannot help that, either—I——"

"Do not reproach yourself, dear. There is no thought in my heart that reproaches you," he answered, gently, as he stood with his back to the window and with his eyes cast down, so that she should not see the trouble that he could not entirely banish from his face.

"Ah, but I do and must. I feel how wickedly, yes, how basely I have acted towards you, David Lindsay, and am still acting, and must still act; but I cannot help it! I cannot help anything. We must part, David Lindsay."

"I know it, dear," he answered, in as steady tones as he could command, for he knew her sympathetic nature, and knew how much she would suffer from compassion if she should see him suffer. "I know we must part. It would be scarcely natural, scarcely possible, that you should love me, to live with me. The ceremony of this morning must go for

nothing, so far as I am concerned, but just this—to be a shield and defence about you, to protect you from your guardian's suit and from your own heart's weakness—that is all. When you are older and stronger, and able to do without it, the empty ceremony of this morning can be set aside, annulled—for, Gloria, the marriage rites, so sacred between souls that are already one, was but an idle and empty ceremony between you and me, and is good for nothing but a temporary defence to your helplessness. It has given me a husband's right to protect you before the world, Gloria, but I shall use it only as a brother. As a brother, I will escort you to your own home, Gloria, and establish you there."

"And then?" she inquired, in a voice scarcely above her breath.

"Then, dear, I will bid you good-bye, when I see you safe."

CHAPTER XIX

LOVE WITHOUT SELF-LOVE

Stand up! Look below!
It is my life at thy feet I throw,
To step with into light and joy!
Not a power of life but I'll employ—

BROWNING.

"GRYPHYNSHOLD! Take me to Gryphynshold! that is the most remote of all the manors left me by my father. Take me there, for I wish to go as far as possible from all the people I ever knew be-

fore!" said Gloria, in reply to David Lindsay's suggestion that he should convey her to some one of her houses as to a place of refuge.

They were still sitting together, where we left them, in the private parlor of the hotel, on the afternoon of the day of their marriage.

They were now conversing in a quiet and friendly manner on the subject of their approaching departure, for they had resolved to leave Washington the same evening.

Gloria was much more composed now than she had ever been since the hour of her marriage; for David Lindsay had assured her that he should never presume on the position she had given him, even to enter her presence uninvited.

She had, from their childhood up, always loved and trusted him, and now that he had given her this promise, she implicitly believed him, and dismissed all her disquieting doubts.

David Lindsay, meanwhile, magnanimously repressed all exhibition of the bitter mortification and sorrow he experienced. He knew his little playmate too well to blame her. He knew her better than any one else in the world—better than she knew herself. The poor little hunted and helpless fawn had flown to him for refuge, and he would succor her in the way she pleased, not in the way he had wished.

She had chosen her place of refuge, and he would take her there.

"Gryphynshold," he slowly repeated, when she had named the selected point of destination. "What a savage and gloomy name, dear! Where is that?"

"The name is not more gloomy and savage than

the place, I fear. It is situated in the extreme southwestern part of Virginia, on or near the point of juncture with North Carolina and Tennessee. It is said to be the most ancient building in all that region of country; it was erected in a gorge of the Iron Mountains by an eccentric and misanthropical Welshman named Dyvyd-ap-Gryphyn, said by some annalists to have been an outlaw in his own country and a refugee in this. However that might have been, or whether he had any legal right to the land or not, there, in the most terrific yawning abyss of the mountain range, he built a rude stronghold of heavy rock and ponderous timber, and called it Gryphynshold; and there he lived, supporting himself by hunting and fishing, like any other savage denizen of the wilderness, and there at length he married an Indian girl of the Cherokee tribe. From that marriage sprang the race of Gryphyns—a proud, surly, ferocious race of men, the bane of each other, and the terror of their neighborhood.”

“It is to be devoutly hoped that they were not a very numerous tribe,” said David Lindsay.

“No. I have heard Aunt Agrippina say that there was never more than one child born of any marriage, and that was always a son. Strange, wasn’t it, from generation to generation, only one son to succeed his father?”

“Very strange; yet it precluded all possibility of law-suits among the heirs. But how came this ill-omened property into your father’s hands, my dear little lady?” inquired David Lindsay, in a playful tone, assumed to hide the heartache that was torturing him.

“Oh, it was a dreadful, dreadful story. I do not know the details of it. But Mr. Dyvyd Gryphyn,

the last descendant of the Welsh outlaw who founded the family, seems to have been a demon in human form, more haughty, surly, cruel and furious than any of his evil predecessors, yet withal as demoniacally beautiful and fascinating as Lucifer, Son of the Morning. After the death of his father, who was killed in a tavern broil, and of his mother, who dropped dead of heart disease on hearing the news—for all these handsome and ferocious demons seemed to have been fondly loved by their unfortunate wives—Dyvyd Gryphyn left Gryphynshold on a tour of Europe. After an absence of three years he returned home, bringing with him a young woman, said to have been fairer than the fairest lily, more blooming than the rosiest rose. He loved her with the surly, jealous, cruel love of his nature and the nature of his fathers, which seems to be not so much love as a devouring and consuming fire, the curse and ruin of all upon whom it chanced to fall. And she loved him with that fatality of devotion which was the doom of all the women ever chosen by the ill men of the race. She was content to bury herself with him in that savage solitude, remote from all human kind; yet he did not seclude himself, but rode forth to distant towns and villages, and remained away for days and weeks together. Sometimes he would bring a party of men home with him, and they would hunt or fish all day, and carouse all night. But he never let any of them see his hidden beauty, who lived as isolated in her dreary prison as any enchanted princess in a fairy castle, until one night, in the midst of a midnight orgie, when his reckless companions were all mad with drink, and he himself was maddest of all, he sent and summoned her to the feast. The poor

thing was not a Queen Vashti, so she obeyed the drunken mandate, and came down. I do not know what happened there—what she was forced to see and bear and hear—but that she was grieved, shocked and terrified beyond all endurance is certain, for as soon as she could break away and escape from the fiendish crew, she fled to the top of the house and hid herself, in a state of delirious terror.”

Gloria paused and shuddered.

“What became of the poor young woman?” inquired David Lindsay.

“I do not know. No one knows what finally became of her. The party of revellers broke up the next morning and Dyvyd Gryphyn rode with them to the next town and remained absent for a day, during which the poor little soul at home grew quieter.”

Again Gloria paused, and David Lindsay inquired:

“And was there a reconciliation between this ill-sorted pair?”

“I do not know. I never even heard whether he saw her again on the morning after the orgie, or whether he took leave of her before setting out on his journey with the revellers. She grew very quiet in his absence.”

Once more Gloria sank into silence. Once more the young man prompted her to continue, saying:

“Well, and when this demon of Gryphynshold came back?”

“Oh, David Lindsay, what next happened is so horrible—so horrible that I shrink from speaking of it,” she said, with a shudder.

“Then do not, lady dear,” he answered, gently.

"Oh, but I must! It is on my mind and it **must** out! I have heard that he came back in the middle of a January night—a bitter cold, freezing night. His face, they say, was as black as a thunder cloud, and his eyes flashed like lightning. Without deigning a word to one of the servants, who came to attend him, he strode at once to the chamber of his poor young victim and ordered her to get up and dress herself, for she should leave his house that night!"

"What an unheard-of monster!" exclaimed David Lindsay.

"Oh, what a wretched maniac! for no man in his senses would have acted with such causeless cruelty. In vain the poor creature pleaded to know what she had done to offend him. He only **cursed** her and threatened to throw her from the window unless she dressed and departed at once. In vain she wept and begged to stay till morning. He told her, with many fierce curses, that by this delay she only trifled with his temper and her own life. Oh! oh, David Lindsay, he thrust that delicate creature forth in the freezing air of that bitter January night to perish on the mountains!" exclaimed Gloria, who had forgotten all her own troubles in recalling this horrible story.

"And did she so perish?" mournfully inquired the young man.

"I do not know. Some weeks from that night a party of hunters found the dead body of a woman on the mountain; but the birds of prey had found it first and it was unrecognizable! Oh, it is all too, too hideous! It was supposed to be the body of Dyvyd Gryphyn's victim, and, as she was never heard of afterwards, it probably was hers."

"And what became of the madman? You were right in calling him a maniac, Gloria, for such he certainly must have been. You said that he was the last owner of Gryphynshold, therefore he must be dead. How did he die?"

"Ah, like nearly all his fierce race! A violent death! On the very day after he had thrust his poor little white slave out into the winter night, he himself fell in a duel with one of the reckless companions of his demoniac orgies of that terrible night when he commanded the hidden beauty to come into their abhorrent presence."

"Killed in a duel at last," muttered David Lindsay to himself.

"Yes, and with him perished the last of the evil race of the Gryphyns of Gryphynshold."

"How came your father to purchase such an ill-omened piece of property?"

"It was advertised to be sold for taxes. Then an heir turned up in a Welsh baronet, who spelled his name in the more modern and civilized manner of G-r-i-f-f-i-n, but who was of the same original Welsh stock, the next of kin, and the heir-at-law, though a very, very, very distant cousin. This gentleman did not want this mountain property, and so, as soon as his claim to it was established, he threw the estate into the market, and my father bought it."

"What could have induced Count de la Vera to buy such a place?"

"He was looking around for opportunities to invest his money in Virginia lands, being determined to become a citizen of the United States. He thought the Iron Mountain must be rich in the ore that gave it its name, and rich in other ores as well; and that this would be a source of great wealth to his

wife and children in the future, if not immediately to himself; for remember that my mother was living at the time of the purchase."

"After what you have told me, dear, I question whether that would be a desirable residence for any one, least of all for you," said David Lindsay, gravely.

"Oh, yes, it would. I particularly wish to go there. Ah, I know not why, but the very savageness of the place attracts me!" exclaimed Gloria.

"Who is in charge of the house? Shall we find it habitable? Will there be accommodations for you?"

"Oh, yes, I suppose so," said Gloria, answering the last question first; "the place should be kept up; my father purchased it just as it was, with slaves, stock, carriage and horses, implements, furniture, and everything. He even retained the hired white overseer and the housekeeper who had been in the service of the last owner. I know that Uncle Marcel used to receive their accounts and pay their wages twice every year."

"So you have decided to go to Gryphynshold?"

"I have determined to go there," said Gloria, firmly.

"Then I must get a map and trace out our course as well as I can, and afterwards inquire about stages."

"I can tell you that; for once during our summer holiday trips, Marcel and I, being in this city, planned to go and take a look at my mountain stronghold, as he called it. So we left Washington by the six P. M. stage-coach for Winchester; thence to Staunton, and thence to the Greenbriar White Sulphur Springs; but there we found the place so

attractive that we went no farther. So I know that we must commence our journey by the stage that leaves here at six o'clock in the evening. What time is it now? Let me see," she said, as she consulted her diamond-studded little gold watch. "It is half-past one. Now, please ring and order a carriage. I must go out and buy a trunk, a work-box, a writing-desk, a dressing-case, clothes, needles and thread, stationery, combs and brushes, and all such necessities of a girl's life, before going into that remote mountain wilderness. And at the same time we can stop at the stage office and take our places."

The young man answered by ringing the bell, and when the waiter appeared he gave the requisite order.

Gloria went in her chamber to put on her sack and hat.

The carriage was soon announced, and in five minutes afterwards the young pair were rolling along the avenue, Gloria looking out from the window to watch for the signs of the shops she wished to visit.

Presently she stopped the carriage before the door of the only general dealer and outfitter in ladies' ready-made garments that the city then afforded.

David Lindsay left her there and went to book their places in the Winchester stage-coach.

It took Gloria three full hours to drive from place to place and collect all she wanted. She found them all without leaving the avenue, however. She had the trunk put on behind the carriage and the goods all piled within it, to save time by taking them to the hotel herself. Finally she reached her rooms at about five o'clock and spent half an hour in diligent packing.

David Lindsay then came to take her down to dinner, which they had scarcely finished before the stage-coach called to claim them.

In those slow days stage-coaches did not start exactly on time, as railway trains are supposed to do now. I have known a stage-coach to wait twenty minutes while John C. Calhoun and Henry Clay leisurely finished their breakfast before taking their seats to leave Washington at the end of a session of Congress.

Our young pair did not keep the coach waiting. They soon had their luggage brought down and bestowed in the boot, and soon after found themselves comfortably seated, the only passengers except two returning country dealers who had been East to purchase goods for the spring trade. This class indeed formed the bulk of travelers at this season of the year.

It was dark when the coach started on its long and wearisome journey.

There was neither moon nor stars out, for the sky was quite overclouded, so that there was no temptation for the passengers to gaze abroad as the stage-coach rattled over the newly macadamized avenue on through Washington, Georgetown, Tennesseetown to Rockville, where it changed horses, and where one of the travelers left them and another one took his place.

When the coach started again, Gloria curled herself up in her corner and tried to go to sleep, for she was in no way interested in the conversation concerning the dullness of the trade and the unpunctuality of debtors which the country merchants had forced upon her companion.

Rocked, or fatigued, by the rolling of the cumber-

some old coach, Gloria was soon fast asleep, and she slept through the whole night, undisturbed except by the stoppage at the post-houses to change horses.

At sunrise they reached Leesburg, where they stopped to breakfast and to change coaches, taking the Winchester coach.

They rode all day through the most beautiful passes of the lesser Blue Ridge and reached Winchester in the Valley in time for an early tea.

Here again they were to change coaches and take the Staunton stage.

David Lindsay would have prevailed on Gloria to stop and rest till morning, but she was determined to pursue her journey.

They had but an hour here before the starting of the Staunton coach, and Gloria made the most of her time to refresh herself by a wash and prepare comfortably for her second night's ride.

After an excellent tea, for which their wintry day's journey had given them a keen appetite, the young travelers took their seats in the Staunton coach and recommenced their journey.

And this second night, poor, disappointed David Lindsay slept as soundly in his seat as did the willful beauty, Gloria, in hers.

Not even the stoppage of the coach to change horses, amid the flashing lights of the roadside post-houses, or the getting off of old passengers and climbing in of new ones succeeded in arousing them, for if disturbed they would draw a long breath, slightly change position, and drop asleep again.

They never opened their eyes until the stage-coach stopped at Woodstock, when the tumultuous

getting out of their fellow-passengers at once fully awakened them.

Then they saw that the sun was at least an hour high, and that the horses were being taken from the coach before a spacious hotel in the principal street of a country town.

"What place is this?" drowsily inquired David Lindsay.

"Woodstock, sir, where we change horses and get breakfast," answered the guard.

David handed his sleepy companion from the inside of the heavy old vehicle, and led her into a pleasant parlor, where their fellow-travelers were already gathered around a large, open fireplace, in which a glorious hickory wood fire was blazing. The party there made room for the young lady.

But she did not stay with them long. A neat colored girl came up to her and respectfully whispered the question as to whether she would not like to go to her room before breakfast.

Decidedly Gloria would like to do that very thing. So she arose and followed the girl, who lifted and carried the young lady's traveling-bag to a spacious chamber over the parlor, with white dimity window-curtains and bed-spread, and a fine fire blazing up the open chimney-place.

The girl supplied the young traveler with warm and cold water, fresh towels, and every other requisite for the toilet—informing her, meantime, that she had half an hour before breakfast.

Gloria was glad. She sent for her trunk to be brought up, and had a thoroughly refreshing toilet, with a full change of dress.

Then, as fresh as if she had risen from a comfortable bed, instead of coming out of a lumbering

stage-coach, she went down and joined her fellow-travelers at a delicious breakfast of coffee, hot rolls, buckwheat cakes, venison, quails, ham and every dainty of the season.

After the breakfast, half their fellow-passengers entered with them into the Staunton coach. (The other half had diverged in various directions.)

Their way now lay down the great valley of Virginia, with the Blue Ridge mountains on the east and the Alleghanies on the west—a paradise of beauty in the summer, and a fine country even when covered with snow, as it was now, in mid-winter.

By nightfall they reached Staunton.

Gloria was much fatigued, and again David Lindsay implored her to rest for one night.

But Gloria, willful as ever, was bent upon going on until she should reach the end of her journey. That extreme bourn, the "Hold" in the Iron Mountains, on the confines of three States, possessed a weird attraction like the lodestone, and drew her on and on.

"It is like a place in a dream—a place in a nightmare—but it fascinates me all the same," she answered to the expostulations of David Lindsay.

After a substantial supper, finished with strong coffee, the travelers who were to go farther took seats in the changed coach, and began the third night's journey towards Lexington.

Again, as before, the two young people slept throughout the ride, only, being still more fatigued, they slept more soundly than ever, and only awakened when, at sunrise, the coach drew up at the hotel in the main street of the little town of Lex-

ington, and their fellow-passengers began to climb over them in getting out.

Here they stopped for an hour. A refreshing wash, a substantial breakfast, and a brisk walk up and down the village street, restored the strength and spirit of the wearied young pair, so that they re-entered the lumbering old coach without any remaining oppression from fatigue, and well prepared to enjoy the day's ride through the varied scenery of hill and dale, woods, waters, fields, farms, towns and hamlets that diversified the valley that lay between the two great ranges of mountains.

Towards evening the valley narrowed and the mountains rose until the road seemed to be approaching a gorge.

While there was yet light enough, David Lindsay drew a pocket map from his breast and began to examine it.

"If our journey takes us through that yawning chasm, I think we had better stop for the night at the first tavern we come to," suggested the young man, thinking more of the safety of his companion than of his own.

"No! where the coach can go, we can go, night or day," persisted Gloria.

It was dusk when they reached the gap they had seen so far before them. There was a great stone building on a river that broke through the mountains at this point. The water reflected the high precipices and the buildings with their gleaming lights. The place was a combination of tavern, post-house, mill and ferry.

Here they stopped to change horses and get supper, after which the coach, with its passengers,

freight and horses, was ferried across the river to the other side, and then it took the road beneath the shelter of the snow-clad mountains, and kept it, plodding along slowly for the rest of the night.

But we must not dwell too long on this picturesque journey.

CHAPTER XX

GRYPHYNSHOLD

But there no more shall human voice
Be heard to rage—lament—rejoice—
The last sad note that swelled the gale
Was woman's wildest funeral wail.

BYRON.

FROM this point, however, they had left the lovely landscape of the valley and entered as by a natural gate into the wild mountain scenery, that, as they went on, grew wilder, more dreary and desolate.

They were two more days and nights on the road, stopping at irregular intervals to change horses at wayside post-houses, located just where it was possible to put them, or to breakfast, dine and sup at roadside taverns or little village hotels, until at the close of the fifth day from starting on their wearisome journey, they reached a ferry on the banks of a narrow, deep and rapid river, on the opposite side of which arose a lofty range of dark, cedar-covered mountains.

Here their stage journey ended.

They left the coach, had their baggage taken, and entered the ferry-house.

The coach, after changing horses, went on its way.

Gloria and David Lindsay found themselves in a homely parlor, with bare walls and bare floor, a few flag-bottomed chairs and a pine table. The only ornaments were a defaced looking-glass between the windows and a framed picture of old-fashioned sampler-work representing a willow-tree over a tombstone, hung over the mantel-piece.

It was, however, heated by a roaring fire of great cedar logs, for cedar was the most plentiful wood in that mountain region, and it was lighted by two tall tallow-dips in iron candlesticks.

David Lindsay drew forward a chair and placed it before the fire for his weary companion, and then went out to find the landlord, ferryman, or some other responsible party.

After an absence of a few moments he came back, and said :

“Now, dear, I have two plans to propose to you. Choose between them. Mr. Cummings, the landlord here, has no conveyance except a heavy wagon drawn by mules, which he says is the safest sort for these mountain roads, and in which he is willing to send us on to Gryphynshold either to-night or to-morrow morning. The accommodations here are very rude and plain, as you see. You may judge what the upper rooms are by this, which I suppose is the best. Now it is for you to decide whether to go on to-night or to stay here and rest till morning and take the daylight for your journey to Gryphynshold.”

“Oh, let us go on at once! Where the mules can take the wagon, surely we can go,” promptly replied Gloria.

David Lindsay went out and gave the order. His exit was followed by the entrance of a colored girl, who respectfully invited the young lady to go up into a bed-room where she could lay off her wraps and refresh herself while the supper and the wagon were getting ready.

Gloria willingly followed her, and took the benefit of all her offered services.

Then, feeling much better, she slipped a piece of money in the poor girl's hand and went down stairs, where an excellent supper awaited them.

Whatever the mental troubles of the young pair might be, the long journey over the snow-clad and frozen roads, and through the pure, exhilarating air of mid-winter had given them fine, healthy appetites, and they both did full justice to the coffee, corn-bread and venison steaks that were set before them.

Immediately after supper they entered the heavy wagon, into which their luggage had already been placed, and settled themselves to continue their journey to Gryphynshold.

"Mind, Tubal," called the landlord to his negro driver, "you take the lower road! It is the longest, but it is the safest."

"Yes, sar," responded the darkey.

"And when you get to the Devil's Backbreaker be sure to jump off and lead the mules all the way up, or there'll be an accident. Do you mind?"

"Yes, sar."

"And when you come to Sinking Creek, be certain to look out for the water-post, to see if it is low enough to ford."

"Yes, sar."

"And when you get up to Peril Ledge get off and

lead the beasts again; and mind you be very careful! I don't want another broken neck broughten back here for a crowner's quest."

"No, sar."

"Now, then, start, and mind what I tell you."

"Yes, sar," said Tubal, and as he slowly set his mules in motion, he muttered to himself: "'Tain't de dangers ob goin' dere to old Grippinwolf—omphe! no! I don't mind goin' dere, but as to stayin' dere all night to res' de mules—no, sar!—not Tubal!"

"What are you talking about, old man?" inquired David Lindsay.

But by this time they had reached the edge of the river, and Tubal's whole attention was engaged in driving his mules on to the great flat ferry-boat, upon which stood four men with very long poles to push it over.

Nothing more was said until after they had reached the other side and Tubal had driven the wagon off the boat on to a road running between the front of the precipice and the river.

"What is the matter with old Gryphynshold that you would not stay all night in the place?" again questioned David Lindsay, whose interest in the ancient house had been deeply excited by the story of the last owner.

"What de matter long ob Grippinwolf, you ax? Now, look here, young marster, I dunno who yer is, nor what yer arter comin' up here to Grippinwolf, whar no decent Christian hasn't been visitin' in de memory ob man! But you jes' take a fool's advice an' turn right square roun' an' go right straight back whar yer come from. Don't keep on to Grippinwolf," said the old man, solemnly.

"Why shouldn't we go on? What is the matter with Gryphynshold, I ask you again?" inquired David.

"Debbil's de matter wid it, young marster, jes' de debbil! Not as I'd mind dat so much, if it war on'y de debbil, 'cause we read so much about him in de catechism dat he feels like a ole acquaintance ob ourn—nateral like—on'y we don't want to fall in his hands. No, I don't mind him so much; but dere's heap wuss dan de debbil as ails old Grippin-wolf."

"What is it, then?" inquired David, interested, in spite of his better reason.

The old negro paused, as if to give full effect to his words, and then solemnly replied:

"Dead people!"

"Dead people!" echoed David Lindsay, in amazement.

"Ooome!" groaned the old man.

"How can the dead trouble the place?" inquired the young man.

"Ooome!" groaned the negro.

"What do they do? They lie quietly in their graves, do they not?"

"Ooome! Hush, honey! I wish dey did!"

"What do they do, then?"

Again the negro paused to give full effect to his words, as he mysteriously replied:

"Dey walks!"

"Walks!"

"Yes, honey, de dead people walks in Grippin-wolf—walks so continual dat dey won't let any-body else lib dere."

"Why, Mrs. Brent, the housekeeper, lives there!"

exclaimed Gloria, putting in her voice for the first time.

"What say, honey?" inquired the negro.

"I say the housekeeper, Mrs. Brent, lives there."

"Who? Her?" exclaimed Tubal, in such a tone of scornful denial that Gloria hastened to add:

"She does live there, does she not?"

"Ole mist'ess lib in Grippinwolf? Ooome! Yer better jes' ax her to lib dere, dat's all!"

"Then the housekeeper does not live in the house, if I understand you aright?" said Gloria, in unpleasant surprise.

"Hi, what I tell you, honey? Nobody can't lib dere 'mong de dead people!"

"What nonsense you talk, old man. Some one must live there to take care of the house."

"Well, den, dey don't, young mist'ess, an' I tell yer so good! De ghosts has 'jected everybody out ob dat house, and dey has had it all to deirselves dis twenty years or more."

"Then my guardian has been completely deceived! He has been paying a salary to a housekeeper who has abandoned her duties. And if the house is deserted, as he says, what shall we do, David Lindsay?" inquired Gloria, in a tone of indignant distress and perplexity.

"Turn right roun' an' go straight back whar yer come from! You do dat while times is good. Dat's de 'wice what I gibbed yer fust, an' dat's de 'wice what I gib yer last," said Tubal, answering for his passenger.

"Is there no one on the place to receive us, then?" inquired David Lindsay.

"Oh, dere's de oberseer, in his own house, 'bout quarter ob a mile dis side ob Grippinwolf Hall; but

Lor', de people 'bout here don't call de place Grip-pinwolf no more—dey calls it Ghost Hall."

"Where does the housekeeper live?" inquired David Lindsay.

"Oh, she—she libs at de gate lodge. She moved dere when she was dejected by de ghosts."

"Now, Gloria, we have not ridden more than two miles from the ferry. What would you like to do? Turn back, as the old man advises, and stop at the ferry for the up coach and take our places for the North, and for some other home of yours more convenient and attractive, or go on to this?" earnestly inquired David Lindsay.

"Oh, go on to Gryphynshold, by all means. Since I have heard the supernatural tales told by this old man, which well supplement the horrible stories told me by Aunt Agrippina, I am more than ever determined to go on to Gryphynshold. The overseer can certainly give you a bed in his cottage for to-night, while I shall stay at the gate lodge with the housekeeper——"

"And as for me," put in the old negro, "soon's ebber I gets to dat same gate-house, which won't be 'fore midnight, I gwine to lop you all right down dere an' turn right round and drike my mules straight home ag'in. All de money in dis univarse wouldn't hire ole Uncle Tubal to take up his lodgings 'long ob de dead people! Leastways, not till I's dead myself!"

"You can do as you please," said David; "but tell us what gave rise to these ridiculous stories?"

"What rised 'em? Why, de ghosts rised 'em! De ghost ob dat ole Satan's demon son, Dyvyd Grippinwolf, who murdered de booful young ooman as he stole away from her friends an' fotch to his

own Debbil's den up yonder. His unquiet ghost rages up and down all night, rushin' t'rough de halls and up de stairs, a slammin' and a bangin' ob de doors like a ravin' mad bull. And no bolts or bars ebber strong enough to keep him out. Dat's de one what tarrifies people clean out'n deir senses, young marster, I tell yer good."

"Is old Dyvyd Gryphyn's ghost the only hob-goblin that haunts the hold?" inquired David Lindsay, with a smile.

"Lor', no! Why, dere's crowds of 'em sometimes. All de wicked, wiolent, furious old Gryphyns as ebber libbed dere—which none ob 'em ebber died in deir beds, yer know—all ob dem died wiolent deaths—holds high jubilee-la! dere ebbery night 'long ob all de debbils out'n de pit! Hush, honey! Dat ole house up dere is de werry mouf ob de black pit ob Satan! An' ef anybody was to 'xamine, I reckon dey'd find de deep, dry well in de cellar was nuffin less dan a way down into dat same black pit ob Satan; and all debbils do come up an' down it to hold high jubilee-la! along with all de wicked, furious ole ghosts ob de Gryphyns!"

"Has any one ever seen any of these dreadful orgies?" inquired David Lindsay, with an incredulous laugh.

"You may laugh, young marster," said the old negro, in an offended tone; "but ef yer persists in goin' an' stayin' at dat ole debbil's den, you'll laugh on t'other side ob your mouf, I tell yer good."

"Has any one seen any of these horrible spectres?" reiterated David Lindsay.

"Hi! What I tell yer? Didn't Mr. Oberseer Cummings and Mrs. Housekeeper Brent bofe see an' hear dem? An' didn't de ghost deject dem out'n

de house? An' I, my own self, wid my own eyes, a comin' from de mill one night, passed in sight ob dat ole ghostly house. De night was dark as pitch! Dere was nyder moor nor stars, an' I couldn't hab seed nuffin only for my eyes gettin' use to de dark, yer know. An' I did look up to de ole ghost house, standin' way up dere on de mountain, straight an' black, against de dark sky, an' I couldn't see no windows fust, but all of a sudden I saw all de windows in de front ob de black looking house!"

With this culmination of horror, old Tubal made an awful pause.

But as no one made the expected exclamation of astonishment the old man inquired:

"Now, how does yer fink I saw all de windows in dat dark, deserted house on dat dark night?"

"Heaven knows!" said David Lindsay.

"Want me to tell you?"

"Yes."

"By de light ob de ghosts' eyes!"

"WHAT!"

"By de light ob de ghosts' eyes, sure as I'm a libbin' sinner! Dere was a ghost at every window, an' at some windows dere was two or free, bofe men an' women ghosts. An' every one ob deir eyes was a shining like an inward fire an' lightin' up all de windows!"

Again the narrator made an awful pause.

Gloria was evidently impressed by his story. Not so David Lindsay, who quietly asked: "Had you taken anything to drink that evening, old man?"

"Who? Me? Don't 'sult me, young marster; I'm a Son of Tempunce, an' a brudder in de Bethelum

Methody Meetin’,” said the old man, in dignified resentment.

“I beg your pardon, I really do,” replied David Lindsay, with frank courtesy.

“I did gib yer de bes’ ’wice in my power, not to go nigh dat debbil’s den! But course you’ll do as yer likes. No offence, young marster.”

“Why, you see this lady is fully determined to go on there,” David Lindsay explained.

“Yes, I am,” added Gloria. “All that I hear of that old house only serves to confirm my resolution to go on and see it. We can find accommodations with the overseer or the housekeeper for this one night, David Lindsay, and then to-morrow we will have the old stronghold of ghosts, goblins and devils thrown wide open to the light of heaven, and see if we cannot exorcise them. We will make a thorough investigation, David Lindsay, for I have quite resolved to take up my abode, for the present at least, in that goblin-haunted house, and I feel that, in doing so, I am right.”

CHAPTER XXI

GHOST HALL

There is so foul a rumor in the air,
The shadow of a presence so atrocious,
How could a human creature enter there,
Even the most ferocious?

THOMAS HOOD.

“WELL, young marster, the road turns right here,” said the driver, drawing up his mules.

David Lindsay looked out of the wagon.

On his left lay the dark river, with the snow-covered valley beyond it.

On his right towered the stupendous precipice of the Iron Mountain, cleft down from summit to base, showing a ravine of wildly shattered rocks, bristling with clumps of stunted cedar trees, all dimly seen in the darkness of the winter night.

"You don't call that a pass, do you?" inquired David Lindsay, incredulously, peering out into the gloom.

"Dat's de road, young marster, sure's yer born. Yer better look at it good, 'fore yer make up yer mind to try it."

David Lindsay drew in his head and spoke to his companion.

"Look out and tell me if you still persist in going on," he said.

"I will look out just to please you, but I am bent on going on!" she replied, as she came forward and gazed up the ravine.

"Well?" inquired young Lindsay.

"Well, it looks threatening—very! But I said that I was bent to go on! Where the mules can go, I can go," she persisted.

"Drive on!" exclaimed the young man to the driver.

Tubal did not "drive," however. He slowly descended from his seat and came to the mules' heads and led them on.

It was well, perhaps, that the heavy wagon-cover concealed the terrors of the road that otherwise must have been discovered even through the darkness of the night, and daunted Gloria's unconquered spirit.

After a precipitous descent and the crossing of the stream, the young travelers in the wagon became conscious that the road was rising diagonally up the mountain side.

When they had ascended some considerable distance, David Lindsay put his head out to peer through the shadows and survey the scene.

He found that they were climbing a steep, narrow road on the face of the mountain, with a towering precipice on their right and a falling one on their left, and no room for any vehicle to pass that should chance to meet the wagon.

He drew in his head and was careful to say nothing to his companion of what he had seen. A single start of the mules—a misstep—a balk—would be destruction to man and beast—for over and down the face of the precipice they would go.

Higher and higher they climbed, and climbed for hours and hours.

Then they began to descend—slowly and heavily for perhaps an hour longer.

Finally old Tubal pulled up his mules, stood to recover his breath, and then came to the front opening in the cover of the wagon, and said:

“Well, young marster, here we is at the gate lodge o’ Ghost Hall, or Debbil’s Den, whichever yer likes for to call it. I’ll let yer out here, young marster, for I tell yer good, no money yer could pay down to me would ’duce me to pass t’rough dem dere gates ob hell!”

“Come, come, Tubal, don’t use such strong language before a young lady,” said David Lindsay, as he descended from the wagon and helped his companion to alight.

“I don’t use no stronger language than what de

good book uses anyways. Help me to lift de trunk out, young marster."

"Let us see first whether there is any one up in the gate-house," said David Lindsay, as he left the side of the wagon.

Then he suddenly stood still gazing.

The sombre scene around them had a weird glamour that spell-bound him to the spot.

"What place is this?" he muttered to himself. "It is like a place seen in a dream. It might be a place in some other planet, in some dead earth, or extinct sun!"

It was an awful scene! Mountains rose on every side, their bases clothed with dark forest.

Nearer and dimly visible under the overclouded night sky, towered hideous black rocks, and dark, spectral pine trees that seemed to take goblin shapes in the obscurity. Far back on the right hand, from the midst of these, and scarcely to be distinguished from them, loomed the roof and chimneys of Gryphynshold.

The utter silence as of death that reigned over all, added to the gloom, approaching horror, of this stupendous scene.

David Lindsay turned from it with a feeling of superstitious awe, to the formidable iron gate in the stone wall that ran along the old park on the right hand of the road.

The gate was not locked, but hung heavily upon its strong, rusty hinges, shut by its own weight.

On the right of this gate some outlines of an old lodge could be dimly seen among clustering cedar trees.

But no light appeared to indicate where door or window might be.

"De old 'oman has gone to bed hours ago, most like," pleasantly remarked the wagoner, as David Lindsay passed through the iron gate and the wild thicket of cedar bushes and rapped at the door of the dark house.

"Who is there?" almost immediately inquired a voice from within.

"Nobody to hurt yer, ole mist'ess!" shouted Tubal, who was leaning up against a post of the gate, utterly refusing to enter the haunted grounds. "Nobody to hurt yer, ole mist'ess! Yer knows me—Tubal Cummings, from Wolf's Gap Ferry. I done fotch a young lady and gempleman here what's come to visit yer."

There was a sound of movement in the dark house, and presently a light gleamed through the joints of the windows, and soon afterward the door was opened by an elderly woman, who stood on the threshold, bearing a flaming tallow candle high above her head, and exclaiming:

"Uncle Tubal! Do you say you have brought visitors here at this place, at this hour of the night? Who are they, and what do they want?"

"Dat's jes' what dey mus' 'splain for deirselves, Mist'ess Brent. Yer don't catch dis ole chile comin' in dere to tell yer!" exclaimed the man, beating a retreat to the shelter of his wagon.

"Tell her precisely who we are, David Lindsay. Tell her the exact truth," said Gloria, coming to his side.

Young Lindsay went up to the housekeeper and Gloria followed closely. They could not see the face of the woman, for the candle she held aloft cast her into deep shadow.

"Let me introduce myself and this young lady, madam——"

"Who are you, then?" abruptly interrupted the housekeeper.

"This is the young lady of the manor. You will probably recognize her when you look at her, though I hear you have not seen her since she was seven years old. I have the honor to be her husband, and my name is Lindsay," replied the young man.

"Gra-cious Heav-ens!" cried the woman, lowering the candle, and holding it closely under the stranger's nose, to the great danger of his silky beard.

"Look at me, Mrs. Brent, and see if you can remember me," said Gloria, with a smile.

The candle was quickly transferred from the danger of singeing David's mustache to that of scorching Gloria's nose, as the old housekeeper peered into the girl's face.

"Ye-es. N-no. I don't know. I see something in the eyes like, but——"

The old woman stopped and put the candle so close to the girl's brow that Gloria started and shrank back.

"Pray do not keep the young lady standing out here in this bitter cold. She is already chilled and weary. Let us come in. We expected to find you at the house yonder. But that being shut up and deserted, we must beg shelter from you even here," persisted David Lindsay.

"Oh, yes, to be sure. Come in. I did not get your letter, indeed I did not, sir, or I should have been ready for you. But you see Wolf's Gap—that's the nearest post-office—is a long way off,

and we never send there except four times a year, when Mr. Cummings, the overseer, sends in his quarterly reports. I didn't get your letter to say you were coming. I am very sorry, ma'am, that there is nothing better than this poor house to ask you to, but such as it is, you are welcome," said Mrs. Brent, as she led the young pair into a large room, in which a great fire of hickory logs smouldered luridly in the deep, broad chimney-place.

She lighted a second candle and placed both on the mantel-shelf, and then took from a large deal box near the chimney corner a handful of dry brushwood and put it under the smouldering logs, kindling them into a ruddy blaze.

Finally she placed two chip-bottomed chairs before the fire and invited her visitors to be seated.

"So sorry I did not get your letter, indeed, sir," she repeated, as she once more stirred the fire.

"We did not write. There was no time. We made up our minds rather suddenly, one day, to come down here, and we started the same evening," said Gloria, as she leaned back in her chair and stretched her half-frozen feet and hands to the genial blaze.

"Oh, indeed, then, I feel so relieved! Of course, you could not have expected to find the house prepared for you, and are not disappointed," exclaimed Mrs. Brent.

"I am sorry to say that we are rather so; for we expected to find you living up at the hall, and some rooms at least kept in readiness for just such a contingency as this," replied Gloria.

"Living up at the other house! Oh, young lady, you don't know! But I'll say nothing about that

now. I am so grieved not to have things comfortable for you here!"

"Never mind—never mind!" exclaimed Gloria, good-naturedly. "To-morrow is a new day, and everything can be arranged then. As for to-night, we are both so tired with our week's ride that I think we could rest comfortably in any motionless place. I shall remain here with you, and Mr. Lindsay will get our wagoner to show him the way to the overseer's house, where he proposes to lodge."

"But that is such a pity, to separate you two! Though, indeed, I have got only one bedroom—the one above this—there are two beds in it. I and my niece sleep in one. The other is vacant and at your service, ma'am, if you don't object to sharing our room with us," said Mrs. Brent, apologetically.

"Not at all! I shall be so glad to lie down anywhere after sitting up for a week," answered Gloria.

"But you would like some supper, sir?" inquired the housekeeper, turning to David Lindsay.

"No, I thank you. We had supper at Wolf's Gap, and we only need rest. Gloria, I will go out and speak to the wagoner, and see if he is ready to guide me to the overseer's house. I will also get him to help me in with your trunk," he whispered, as he arose and left the room.

Gloria now, for the first time since her arrival, looked at the apartment and its occupant. It was a large, rude place, with a bare, flagstone floor, bare, unplastered stone walls; in front a heavy oaken door, flanked by two large windows, whose very sills were stone; a ceiling with heavy rafters crossing it, and finally, the immense, yawning fireplace, with its iron dogs supporting the great,

smouldering hickory logs from whence the light blaze of brushwood had already died away.

The furniture was as rude as the room—heavy oaken chairs and tables, a spacious dresser with broad shelves reaching from the floor to ceiling, and furnished with all the crockery ware, cutlery, tin, pewter, and iron utensils of the little *ménage*.

In another corner a tall, coffin-like old clock stood, with its foot on the flagstone floor, and its head to the rafters. A rug of home-made rag carpet lay before the fire, and mats of a similar material lay before the front and back doors.

That was all. It was a rude, plain room.

From the contemplation of the place Gloria turned to the inhabitant.

The latter was a tall, thin, dark-skinned woman with small, deep-set black eyes that had a watchful, sidelong, frightened glance, like those of a person who had suffered one overwhelming terror and was continually looking out for another. Her hair was quite white and parted smoothly over her forehead, and confined by a close white linen cap tied under her chin. She wore a long, narrow, black gown, without a scrap of white about her neck or hands.

"This is a poor, rude place for you to be in, Mrs. Brent. Surely not to be compared with the comfortable apartments that must have been assigned you in the manor house," said Gloria, compassionately.

"Oh, young lady, don't mention the manor house. Don't! You don't know; you can't know. But I'll say nothing more about that now. Here comes the gentleman." David Lindsay had pushed open the door, and was coming in, holding one handle of the trunk while Tubal Cummings held the other.

They sat it down on the floor, and Tubal immediately bolted, flinging behind him these words:

"I'll wait for yer outside the gate, young marster. I can't stay here, indeed!"

David Lindsay laughed, saying:

"I had the utmost difficulty in persuading that old man to help me with the trunk. I had at length to bribe him heavily before he would venture to do it. And what do you suppose he means to do, after leaving me at the overseer's?"

"What?" inquired Gloria.

"Go all the way back to Wolf's Gap to-night."

"I know he declared that he would do so; but I did not think he would keep his word," replied Gloria.

"Now, dear, in mercy to the old fellow who has such a long way to return, I must bid you good-night. You, also, need rest so much that you had better go to bed as soon as possible." So saying, David Lindsay took her hand, pressed it and left the lodge.

The old housekeeper stared.

"Is that the way your husband takes leave of you? I never did! I really never did!" she said.

"We understand each other," said Gloria, smiling.

"Well, if you do, I suppose that is enough," muttered Mrs. Brent, who all this time was busy beating up eggs with sugar in a bowl, while something spicy simmered in a saucepan before the fire.

Now she took the saucepan and slowly poured its contents over the beaten eggs in the bowl, stirring thoroughly with a spoon as she poured.

Then she filled a tumbler with the pungent and fragrant compound, and gave it to Gloria, saying kindly:

"Take this, honey. It is as nice a glass of spiced mulled cider as ever I brewed in my life. It will warm you all through, and drive out any cold you may have caught."

Gloria smiled, and thanked her kind hostess, and took and sipped the spicy beverage which she found delicious in taste and delightful in effect.

The housekeeper filled a second glass for herself, and sat down and sipped it for company.

"I should have offered to make some for your gentleman, honey, only as he was going out in the cold again it would have done him more harm than good. Besides, to tell the honest truth, I don't think such indulgence in drink is good for young men anyhow. They begin with cider, and are too apt to end with rum."

Very much revived and comforted, Gloria finished her mulled cider and put her glass upon the mantelpiece.

"Now, then, dear, we will go up stairs to bed," said Mrs. Brent, placing her own glass beside the other one, and blowing out one candle and taking the other.

"Are you not going to lock the door?" inquired the visitor.

"Law, child, why? There is no one to molest us—except those that no locks can keep out. However, I'll do it to please you," said Mrs. Brent, going to the door and turning the key.

"Thank you very much," said the young lady.

"You're welcome, honey. Now, then, come to bed," she added, as she led the way through the back door to a narrow passage from which a staircase ascended to the upper room.

Gloria picked up her carpet-bag and followed her conductress.

The room above was of the same size with the one below—like that, the walls were of hewn stone, unplastered, but the floor was of heavy oak planks. There were three large windows in front, all hung with coarse blue and white plaid cotton curtains. There was a fire-place, a size smaller than the one below; a pine table, with a small standing looking-glass on it, under the middle window, opposite the fire. There were two beds in the corners of the room, with their low head-boards immediately under the two end windows, on each side of the rude dressing-table.

One of these beds was smoothly made up, as if waiting its occupant. The other was tumbled and tenanted.

“Come here,” said Mrs. Brent in a whisper, going towards the latter.

Gloria followed her and beheld the sleeper, who, in some restlessness, had thrown off the cover, revealing her head, breast and arms.

She was a very young girl, with a delicate face and fragile form, fair, transparent complexion, blooming rosy-red on cheeks and lips, very light, golden-red hair clustering in glittering tendrils around the white forehead and roseate cheeks, and with petite features. She would have been a perfect little beauty but for some irregularities that were even more piquante and charming than any classic perfection could possibly be. First, her dark brown eyebrows were of the fly-away pattern, depressed towards the bridge of the nose and raised towards the temples. Her tiny nose, no bigger than a baby’s, was the most dainty, yet the most decided

pug that ever was seen. Her upper lip was short, and her chin pointed. The whole character and expression of the fair, dainty, petite face, was sly, roguish, mischievous, not to say impish and malign. One arm, the under one, as she lay upon her right side, was drawn back with crooked elbow and clenched little fist. The other arm, the upper one, was thrown over the pillow, also with crooked elbow and clenched little fist. The attitude of the little sleeping beauty was a belligerent one.

"Now that's my niece Philly—Philippa, you know, ma'am—and that's the way she always sleeps. Just like a kitten or a puppy that is dreaming of a fight. Now just you watch!"

With these words, Mrs. Brent took hold of the shoulder of the sleeper, exclaiming:

"Phil! Phil! Wake up! Move farther! You'll tumble out of the bed!"

The sleeper gave a little growl and a great bounce, and threw herself over on her other side, striking another aggressive attitude, and immediately relapsed into deep sleep. Gloria could not help laughing as she said:

"She is very pretty and very good-humored, I am sure, notwithstanding that she dreams of fights!"

"Oh, yes, she is a good girl enough, but an awful trial for all that!"

"Your niece, you said?"

"Yes, my niece," repeated the housekeeper, as she covered the sleeping girl and set the candle on the mantelpiece.

Then, while the two undressed and prepared for bed, Mrs. Brent volunteered some further information.

"You see there's a good many Cummingses round

about here, of a good old Scotch family, too. Did you never read of the Red Comyns and the Black Comyns in your school-books, honey?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Well these Cummingses are of the same old clan. I was a Cummings myself before I was married. I am a lone widow now, you know."

"Yes, I have heard so."

"Well, I had three brothers. Alexander, who is the landlord and ferryman and post-master down at Wolf's Gap; and Ralph, who is your overseer here; and last of all, poor Cuthbert, my youngest brother, who was the father of this girl, Philly. He used to drive the stage between Wolf's Gap and Hill Top in North Carolina, but he and his wife have been in heaven this many a day. Philly used first to live with Aleck at Wolf's Gap. I, having no children of my own and being lonesome like, have adopted the orphan. And a great charge she is to me! Why, ma'am, I had rather undertake ten boys than one such girl. She rides the wildest horses; she hunts the worst game. Yes! She rides, shoots and hunts like a wild Indian! And even dreams of it when she sleeps."

"I shall like Philly! I am sure I shall like Philly! There is something in her," exclaimed Gloria, as she got into her own bed and drew the cover closely up around her neck, for it was keenly cold up in these mountain regions, so that the great wood fire scarcely sufficed to warm the room.

The housekeeper blew out the candle and laid herself down to rest.

Gloria, utterly prostrated with her week's ride, no sooner laid her head upon the pillow than she

dropped into a deep and dreamless sleep that lasted until far into the next morning.

When she awoke, at length, the sun was shining in through the blue and white checked curtains.

She looked around in some confusion on the rude, unplastered walls and ceiling, the bare oak floor, and the unpainted wooden chairs and table, quite unable to remember where she was; but in a few moments memory returned, and she understood the situation.

There was no one but herself in the room, which was now restored to perfect order, the other bed being made up, the fire replenished, the hearth swept, and fresh water and clean towels placed on the rude dressing-table.

"They have all got up and left me to sleep my fatigue off, I suppose," she said, as she left the bed and began to make her plain morning toilet.

She was soon dressed in a dark blue cashmere gown, with white linen cuffs and collar, and a black bow.

Then she went down stairs and found Mrs. Brent in the lower room, and seated before the fire engaged in carding wool.

"Good-morning, honey! You have had a real good sleep, and I hope it has done you good!" she said, rising, and placing a chair to the fire for her young guest.

"Indeed I have, Mrs. Brent; thank you. It must be very late."

"Look at the clock, my dear. It is after ten. Well, I am glad you slept so long. I would not have disturbed you if you had slept all day. Now you are down I will get you a bit of breakfast in a few moments," said Mrs. Brent, as she took up a

tea-kettle which was sitting on the hearth before the fire, and hung it over the blaze, where it immediately began to sing for boiling.

"Has any one—I mean has Mr. Lindsay been here this morning?" inquired Gloria.

"Oh, yes, honey. Mr. Lindsay and my brother, the overseer, you know, were here by seven o'clock this morning; but Mr. Lindsay wouldn't let you be disturbed on no account. He asked me to keep everything very quiet, so as to let you sleep as long as possible, which I am sure I have done, my dear," replied the housekeeper while she was taking the tea-pot and the cannister from the dresser to make the tea."

"Where are they now?" inquired Gloria.

"Oh, they went right off up to the old house to open and air it. Yes, more than three hours ago," answered the dame, as she made the tea and set it to draw.

"When will they be back?"

"Well, when they have done the job, I guess; but I don't know when that will be," replied the dame, as she took two dressed partridges from a plate on the shelf, and laid them over the fire.

"You see," she added, as she took a cedar board about the size of a shingle, and plastered one side of it over with a thick corn-meal batter, and put it before the fire, propped up by a smoothing-iron. "You see, they will have to open all the doors and windows from cellar to garret, and kindle fires in every fire-place—that will take them pretty much all day."

"Well, I think, if you will kindly direct me, I will walk up to the house as soon as I have taken breakfast."

"I would advise you not to go yet awhile, honey," said the housekeeper.

And now she became so busy—laying the cloth, then turning the johnny-cake, putting the crockery-ware on the table, then turning the partridges—flying quickly from hearth to cupboard, and from cupboard to fire-place—that Gloria could keep up no sustained conversation.

"Now, then, sit up and take your breakfast, my dear," said Mrs. Brent, when she had at last got the frugal morning meal upon the table.

"These partridges are delicious," said Gloria, when, with an appetite whetted by the keen mountain air, she had eaten a half of one.

"Yes, that's some of Philly's game! She shot them on Saturday. The imp is good for something. Only you see, honey, when she goes out I am always in a dread that she'll never get back alive. Maybe never be heard of again until her bones are found bleaching on some rocky ledge!"

"Oh, how dreadful! You ought not to entertain such dismal thoughts!"

"I can't help it, honey, when that girl goes on as she does!"

"Would you have such fears for a boy?"

"Lord, no! My nephews, Ralph's boys, go hunting almost every day and keep the hotel down there at Wolf's Gap supplied with game; but they are boys."

"Well, and she's a girl."

"But they know how to take care of themselves."

"And so does she, I have no doubt, a great deal better than they do. I like Philly. I am sure I shall like her very much. Where is she now?"

"Oh, gone out with her gun and dogs. What do I

tell you? When she isn't about some mischief she is dreaming of it."

"I am her debtor for a delicious breakfast. I will not hear her blamed. I like Phil better the more I think of her. I admire her all the more for having such a dauntless spirit in such a little, fragile body."

Gloria had scarcely spoken these words when there was a sudden and tumultuous entrance of a girl in a cap, jacket, short skirt, and long boots, with a game-bag slung over her shoulders, a fowling-piece in her hands, and a couple of dogs at her heels.

She set her gun down with a ringing clank in the corner, then pulled her game-bag off and threw it on the floor at the feet of the old lady, exclaiming:

"There auntie! There's a treat for your dinner! Eight brace of birds, and all bagged in less than two hours! Say! have you got any fresh meat for Æneas and Dido? Good dogs! Good dogs!" she continued, patting the heads of a fine pointer and a finer retriever.

"My dear, don't you see a lady present?" said the housekeeper, in an admonishing tone.

The girl seemed to see the lady for the first time. She fell back a step or two, dropped her chin upon her chest, turned up her eyes shyly, and put her finger in her mouth like a stupid and awkward child in the presence of a stranger.

"Mrs. Lindsay, this young person is my naughty niece, Philippa."

"I am glad to see you, Miss Cummings," said Gloria, who could not help thinking all that awkward shyness was just put on for the fun of the thing.

"My name is Phil. I don't know myself by any other name," replied the girl, giving her hat a push that cocked it on one side of her curling, salmon-colored hair, and gave an additional air of impishness to the mischievous face beneath.

"Then I am even gladder to see you, Phil! Gladder than I should be to see Miss Cummings. I hope we will be friends. Shall we, Phil?"

"I don't know—maybe—I think so—if you don't begin to put on airs with us," slowly and condescendingly replied the elf.

"I hope I shall do nothing so silly. Why should you suspect me?"

"Oh, I know you are our young lady of the manor, and have come with your fine husband, who is a very great man indeed, to take possession of everything! If the ghosts up there will let you. Ah!" said the imp, with a malign leer in her beautiful, long, light blue eyes.

"I am truly sorry, but I am really not to blame for being your lady of the manor. It was a providential arrangement in which I was no more consulted than I was about being born. I hope you will forgive me for finding myself in such an obnoxious position, and be my friend," said Gloria, with a good-humored sarcasm that seemed to win the impish creature before her.

"I don't know what I can do for you. I don't know how to be anybody's friend unless I can do something for them. I can do nothing for you but keep you in birds and hares and such. That is not much. They are so plenty in the forests below here," said Phil, thoughtfully.

"That is much more than I shall be able to do for you."

"I don't want anybody to do anything for me, and what's more, I won't have it. I want to do all the doing myself."

"Oh, you proud little sinner! Well, there is something I want you to do for me right away. You know the path up to the house. Will you show it to me?"

"Yes, I will go there with you, but not right away! I must feed Æneas and Dido first, auntie! I know Uncle Ralph slaughtered an ox last week and sent a lot of beef. I want a couple of pounds of sirloin for my dogs, and I am going to get it," said the elfish being, throwing off her cap and hurrying out of the back door.

"Now that's the way, honey, she always does! She's going to feed them dogs with the best meat in the house!" complained the old lady.

"Well, the dogs have helped her to provide the finest game," said Gloria.

"Ah, I see, my dear, you are going to encourage that girl! I see it quite plain! Well, I wish you would take her altogether as a seamstress, or house-keeper, if it were possible she could be either, or in any way she could be useful or entertaining to you; for, indeed, I am anxious to get her away from this sort of a wild life that keeps me always in a fever!"

"Perhaps I may take you at your word, Mrs. Brent, if Phil is agreeable; but what would you do without her?"

"Oh, first-rate! I would take Marthy, Aleck's youngest daughter! She's older than Phil, and is a first-rate spinner and weaver and seamstress, and house-girl generally. I could do a deal better with Marthy than with this Witch-a-windy!"

As the old lady spoke, Phil came in and said:

"Well, I've given the beauties one full meal, if they never get another! And now I am ready to go with you to Gryphynshold, Mrs.—Mrs.—— Oh, look here now—bosh! You don't look a bit more of a woman than I am myself, and if I am to be expected to call you Mrs. What's-her-name, or Anything, our compact of friendship is going to fall through."

"You may call me anything you wish?" said Gloria.

"Well, what is your other name?" demanded Phil.

"Maria da Gloria de la Vera," repeated the young lady, with a merry twinkle of her eyes.

"Mar—ree—ar—dar—— Say it over again, please," exclaimed Phil, stretching her blue eyes.

"Maria da Gloria de la Vera," repeated the young lady, repressing an inclination to laugh.

"Der—lar—Vay—rah! Heaven and earth and the other place! I forget one end before I understand the other! That will never do! Say, what do they call you at home, when they are in a hurry, you know, and haven't got time to sit down and repeat it all over slowly at their leisure?"

"They call me Gloria."

"Glo—ree—ah! Well, that is three long syllables—a great deal too long for a short and busy lifetime! I would rather call you Glo'."

"Quite right, my dear Phil. You may call me Glo'."

"It suits you, too, for there's a glow all around you! Well, then, Glo', I am ready to escort you to Gryphynshold, Ghost Hall, Devil's Den, for by all these names is your manor-house known, lady,"

said the strange girl, as she put on her hat and stood waiting.

"I will be with you in a moment," exclaimed Gloria, as she started up and left the room. She ran up stairs to put on her fur sack and cap, and then hurried down to join her escort.

CHAPTER XXII

WITHIN THE SHADOW

Over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
That said, as plain as whispered in the ear,
"The space is haunted." THOMAS HOOD.

THE two young girls walked out of the lodge and found themselves in a thicket of stunted cedar trees, that, because they were higher than her head, prevented Gloria from beholding one of the most magnificent and stupendous landscapes in the country.

A few steps farther, however, brought them out upon the private road that led up to the house.

It was a road so utterly neglected that the thicket of cedars on each side nearly met in the middle, and would have prevented any other than a foot-passenger from passing along it.

This old road led upward all the way to a thickly-wooded knoll, on the summit of which, quite buried in pine and cedar trees, stood the old gray stone building with its heavy oaken doors and heavy oaken-shuttered windows. These were all wide open to the sun and air now.

"Were you here when your grandmother—I mean your auntie, left the house?" inquired Gloria, as they approached the stone portico leading to the door.

"No—oh, dear, no! I never lived here! I always wanted to, though!" replied the girl.

"Come and stay with me, then, for a while, for I should like very much to have you."

"And oh, how I should like to come!"

"And you would not be afraid of the ghosts?"

"No! I don't believe in them! I wish I could! I would rather see a ghost—if such a being exists—than anything else in the world! That is the reason why I want to live in this house—to watch and wait all day in lonesome rooms, and lay awake all night in hope of seeing a ghost. And if there is any particularly evil haunted room in the house—that is the one I wish to sleep in."

"You shall be accommodated," said Gloria, with a smile, as she went up the moss-grown steps to the wide-open door—a corresponding door at the back of the hall stood, also, wide open, giving a vista through the spacious hall that was paved with flag-stones of gray rock, and furnished with rude benches of oak and mats of cedar shavings. A broad staircase ascended from the middle of the floor. And near each side of the foot of this staircase, were broad, open chimneys in which great fires of brushwood blazed, at once clearing the atmosphere and heating the place. Yet neither the brilliant sunshine, pouring in through the open doors, nor the genial fire flaming up the chimneys, could dispel a certain air of gloom that pervaded the house, depressing all who were within it.

Four inner doors—two on each side—were also

open, giving views of large, lofty rooms, all with flag-stone floors and bare stone walls, and rude, plain oak chairs and tables. No carpets, no curtains, no pictures varied the coarse monotony of their aspect.

David Lindsay came out from one of the rooms, and seeing Gloria, exclaimed:

"You here! I had hoped to have had things in some better order before letting you see the old house. But, how are you? I hope you slept well and are refreshed."

"Thanks. Yes, to all your questions. And now I wish to go all over the house," said the young lady.

"In its present condition it is fit for nothing but a barn or store-house! The more I see of it the more easily I can conceive of the savage nature of the men who built and lived in it; and the more I wonder at its purchase by such a man as the late Count de la Vera! But the mountains are supposed to be rich in mineral wealth for any who have money, and enterprise enough to work them."

While the two spoke together, Mrs. Brent and one of her nephews came in by the front door.

"Well, honey, you see as soon as I righted up the house, I felt as if I ought to come here and see if I could be useful; but I felt most afraid to come up that lonesome road by myself, and maybe I mightn't 'a' got here, after all, if young Jim hadn't come along with a quarter of mutton for the larder, and I just made him stop and bear me company," she said, as she went to one of the fires and began to warm her hands.

"Are the rooms up stairs as bad or worse than

these?" inquired Gloria, after she had inspected all on the lower floor.

"Oh, they are better. Come up and see them, honey. The bed-rooms are all good, and the beds are well preserved. You see, honey, the place has not been so badly neglected as you might think. I have done something to earn my salary. I have come up here in the day once every week with some of the niggers, and had the place opened and aired and fires made in the bed-rooms to dry the dampness," said Mrs. Brent, as she led the way up the broad staircase.

"Well, except that these chambers are drier and cleaner, they have not much to boast of beyond the rooms below. The whole house is awful gloomy. One does not need to see a ghost here. One feels that it is haunted," said Gloria, shuddering, as she completed her inspection of the upper rooms.

"Yes, honey, even in the daytime, with the blessed sun shining in at all the open windows, and people going up and down. Then just think what it must have been at night with no one but my lone self up here and an old colored man and woman in the kitchen down stairs—after what I had seen and heard, too," muttered the old lady, turning pale.

"You? Is it possible, Mrs. Brent, that there can be any foundation for these absurd stories circulated amongst the superstitious colored people, and that you yourself have had any cause to credit them?" inquired Gloria, in great surprise.

"Now see here, honey, I put it to yourself. What did you say yourself, just now? 'One feels that it is haunted.'"

"Oh, yes, by the memory of all the stories of mad

orgies and atrocious deeds that we have heard of the furious old Gryphyns who used to live here, and—the curse that fell upon them. The air is full of maledictions! Haunted by these, Mrs. Brent. Spirits terrible enough to daunt the bravest, yet not visible ghosts,” said the young lady.

“That which I saw and heard, I saw and heard,” solemnly answered the housekeeper, sinking down in an old, green chintz covered arm-chair on one side of the fire that had been kindled in one of the bed-rooms.

“What was it, Mrs. Brent?” inquired Gloria, her curiosity getting the better of her discretion, as she drew a chair to the side of the old lady and seated herself.

“It was that which drove me out of this large, once comfortable and convenient house, to take refuge in that rough, deserted porter’s lodge, at the gate, and has prevented me from ever coming back here except in broad daylight, and with plenty of people to keep me company.”

“But what was it, then, Mrs. Brent?”

“Nor was that the only time I saw and heard what was not of this world! No, nor of heaven either! Nor am I the only one who has seen and heard things about this place enough to raise the hair and curdle the blood of the boldest man in the country.”

“Oh, but you have not told me yet what has been seen and heard about this haunted spot to strike such terror into the hearts of men,” said Gloria, beginning to be infected by the superstitious fears of her companion.

“An evil spirit from the pit! and those he brings with him!” muttered the housekeeper in a low voice.

"What do you mean?" inquired Gloria, in hushed tones.

"The last master of Gryphynshold—old Dyvyd Gryphyn! He whose life was the wickedest of all the wicked ones that had gone before him! He who turned his young wife, or sweetheart—no one knows which she was—out of doors in the middle of a bitter cold January night to perish of cold, as she did on the mountain side! He who that next day was killed in a wicked duel, and whose body lies buried in the unconsecrated earth of the family burial ground—for they were all infidels, and wouldn't let a minister of the Gospel come on the premises. He it is whose spirit cannot rest in the grave, or tarry even with his fellow-devils in the pit, but walks continually up and down through house and thicket in the darkness of the darkest hours in the night!"

"And you have seen him?" questioned Gloria, with incredulous astonishment.

"I was the first to see and hear him after his being killed in the duel. It was no dream, ma'am, it was no delusion, though you look as if you thought so! It was late at night—the night after that poor young creature had been torn from her bed and turned out to die of cold on the mountain. It was a still, cold, freezing night—one of those silent, bitter winter nights when the frost seems to steal into the very marrow of your bones. I was sitting by the big fire in the front hall, waiting for the master to come home so that I could let him in. I had sent all the servants to bed, because they were tired with their work, poor things! and, besides, they would have to get up so early in the morning that they could not afford to lose their

rest. Well, I was sitting there before the fire, with my knees roasting and my back freezing, and not a sound to be heard all over the house, not even a cricket or a mouse. I don't know which was the most awful, the stillness or the cold. Suddenly——”

“Well, suddenly what?” eagerly demanded Gloria, seeing that the old lady paused longer than necessary.

“Suddenly there came on the stillness a violent rush, as of a great gust of wind, that forced the front door open. I jumped up in a panic, but dropped down again; for there stood the master, pale as a corpse, with a ghastly wound on his temple, from which the blood was slowly trickling down his cheek. He did not stop a moment, but glaring at me, strode down the hall, and up the staircase, and disappeared at the top.”

“Good Heavens!”

“I was a strong woman at that time, but I came near swooning, for I thought it was the master himself in the flesh, and that he had got his death-wound somehow. But soon rallying myself, I got up and shut the front door, and bolted and barred it. The night was now as still and breathless as it had been before Dyvyd Gryphyn rushed in with that furious wind. After I had fastened the door I went up to the room over the kitchen in the back building, and waked up old Tubal, who was then the only man-servant about the house.

“‘Tubal,’ I said, ‘rise and dress quickly. Your master has just come home, dangerously wounded.’ Perhaps I ought then to have gone directly to the assistance of the supposed wounded man, but, somehow, I felt afraid to go alone. Old Tubal, who had

been too much accustomed to scenes of violence and their results, in that house, to be very much shocked at what I told him, merely grunted forth:

“‘It’s nothing more’n I expected,’ and then hastened to dress himself and follow me to his master’s room. Well, when we got there——”

“Yes! when you got there!” eagerly exclaimed Gloria, who would hardly let the old lady pause for breath.

“There was no master to be seen! No sign of a master. We looked through some of the nearer rooms, but without finding him. Then we sat down in his room and waited, thinking that he might have gone somewhere about the house, and would be back soon. We waited and waited, until at length I became alarmed; for I thought he might have fainted from loss of blood in some other part of the house. Then old Tubal and myself recommenced our search and went into every room, closet and passage of the house from the attic to the cellar, but without finding any trace of Dyvyd Gryphyn.”

“And was he never found?” inquired Gloria, in a tone of awe.

“Yes, honey, his body had been found twenty miles away, hours before his spirit appeared to me in the hall. At sunrise the next morning, the men who had found it on the duelling ground the other side of Wolf’s Gap, arrived with it at the hall here. There was an inquest, of course, and then the truth came out.”

“What was the truth?”

“Why, it seems that on the occasion of the last feast that Dyvyd Gryphyn held here when he was drunker than usual, he sent for his young wife, and

made her come down and sing for his wild companions. She had a beautiful voice. They were all mad that night. They shocked and terrified the poor thing so that near morning she escaped and fled from them, and locked herself up in her room in a state bordering upon distraction."

"Yes, yes, I have heard that story before."

"Well, when the man came to his senses the next day, he rode away with his guests as far as Wolf's Gap, where they all stopped to rest and drink. They spoke rudely of Gryphyn's hidden beauty, and one man—a Colonel Murdockson—boasted of signs and signals that the lady had given him the night before, to the effect that she was ready to run away with him."

"Revolting!"

"It was as false as the father of lies! Yet Dyvyd Gryphyn, with the furious jealousy of his race, believed the slander. He challenged Murdockson on the spot, and the meeting was arranged to take place the next afternoon in the hollow below Wolf's Gap."

Gloria shuddered.

"The meeting was to be without seconds, and it was only to end in the death of one or both. When all was settled, Dyvyd Gryphyn set out to return home, arrived only at midnight, strode to his wife's chamber, dragged her out of bed and thrust her out in the midnight storm to perish on the mountains, as she did, for her body was also found—though, as the birds of prey had been the first to discover it, it was hardly recognizable."

"I have heard that, too!" shuddered Gloria.

"I only refer to that in its connection with the duel. The next morning he left home to fight it,

although we, at Gryphynshold, had no suspicion of what was afoot. And that night I waited for him as usual when—his spectre came. After the inquest, and the verdict in accordance with the facts, the body of Dyvyd Gryphyn was buried out yonder, as I told you. But his spectre still haunts the place.”

“What became of Murdockson?”

“He left the neighborhood after the duel, and has never been heard of since. You see, ma’am, there were circumstances of horrible atrocity connected with that affair, which I have not had the courage to tell you yet. I may some time. Ah! here comes Mr. Lindsay.”

CHAPTER XXIII

WHAT PHILIPPA SAW

A horrid spectre rises to my sight,
Before my face, plain and palpable.

JOANNA BAILLIE.

DAVID LINDSAY entered the room, with a graver air than usual overshadowing his frank countenance.

Mrs. Brent arose and offered him her own chair by the fire.

With a gesture, he silently thanked her, and signed that she should resume her seat, while he drew another to the hearth for himself, saying, as he sank into it:

“Well, I have been all over this house, from cellar to attic, and I must repeat now from knowl-

edge what I said at first from suspicion, that this place is no home for any lady, and therefore none for you."

"Why?" inquired Gloria, with provoking coolness.

"'Why?' My dear lady, the answer is in everything around you—in the desolation, the dreariness, the solitude——"

"I do not want company," interrupted Gloria.

"In its remoteness from all the life of the world——"

"And I do want to be very quiet," added Gloria.

"In its dilapidation and dampness."

"Good fires can rectify the one immediately, and good workmen the other in due time."

"Finally, in the evil reputation of the place," said the young man, solemnly.

"Now, David Lindsay, if you mean the rumors about the house being haunted, that is just what attracts me to it!" said Gloria, archly.

"It is not that idle rumor to which I refer. A place that has been little better than a stronghold of godless revellers, gamblers, drunkards, duellists, murderers, if all be true that is told of them, is no proper home for any lady, not to say you. It is only fit to be turned into a smelting-furnace for the treasures of iron ore said to be hidden in the depths of these mountains," gravely concluded the young man.

"Oh, then you don't believe that the house is haunted," said Gloria, good-humoredly.

"It is haunted by the association of atrocious crimes and bitter sufferings, if by no other ghosts. Lady dear, I wish you would not think of living here," he pleaded.

"The poor old place is in no way to blame for the evil lives of the monsters who once lived here and have now gone to where they belong—to Pandemonium. I shall stay here, David Lindsay, until I have become familiar with every part of the house, and acquainted with every part of the mountain. If I grow weary of the place I shall take Phil Cummings for a companion and one of her old uncles for an escort, and return to Washington."

As Gloria said this, the housekeeper, who sat between the young pair, looked from one to the other, and with the bluntness that belonged to her nature and circumstances, exclaimed:

"Why, surely, if you go, Mr. Lindsay must escort you himself."

"Mr. Lindsay has business that will compel his return North as soon as he sees me settled in my home," coldly replied Gloria.

David Lindsay's fine face flushed, and then grew pale.

"Well, I suppose, such a big estate as yours, ma'am—for I am told that Gryphynshold is but a small portion of it, and that the bulk of it is in Maryland—will require a deal of attention, not to say what the gentleman's own affairs may call for; but one would think you would have settled all that before you came down here, so as not to be separated so soon again. It seems such a pity," said the housekeeper, sympathetically.

Gloria did not reply, and David Lindsay could not.

"Well, I didn't sit down here to idle away my time. I must go to the linen room and see to getting out the things to make up the beds—though,

dear me, when I come to think of how long they have been packed away in the cedar chests, I don't believe they will be fit for use, for yellowness and closeness," said the housekeeper, getting up to leave the room.

"I will go with you," said Gloria, rising to follow Mrs. Brent, for her sensitive conscience and sympathetic spirit made her dread a *tête-à-tête* with David Lindsay almost as much as she had ever dreaded one with her uncle; not that she thought, for one instant, that the pure-hearted and noble-minded young fisherman would ever, under any temptation, or for any reason, break his word to her, or take the slightest unfair advantage of his position towards her.

She knew that he never would do that. She knew also that he would never plead for the love that she was unwilling to give him; that he would never invoke her pity by any look or tone expressive of the disappointment and humiliation, the sorrow and distress he really suffered, and which she intuitively knew that he suffered. No, but she was afraid of herself. She could trust David Lindsay utterly, but she could not trust herself.

She had loved David Lindsay from their childhood up; but she had never been "in love" with him, or with any one, and she had never wished to marry him, or any other; but driven by the very spite and stress of fate, she had married him, and immediately afterwards realized what a mad, fatal, irreparable error she had committed in uniting her fate to that of one so utterly unfitted by birth, position and education to be her husband!

Yet there were moments now when the memory of their lifelong, innocent, childish affection for

each other melted her heart to tears; when the contemplation of his magnanimity filled her mind with admiration; when all that was best in her own nature bridged the gulf between them, and almost impelled her hands and lips and voice to go where her spirit had gone before.

She was afraid that in some such moments as this she should cast her arms around the neck of her young husband, and press her lips to his and say:

"You saved me once from death, and once from worse than that. You love me more than I deserve. You merit all my love. I am your wife. Do not leave me."

She was in danger of saying this every hour—and she did not wish to say it.

Now she hurried after the old housekeeper, who led the way to a room at the end of the hall, fitted up with shelves above and drawers below, all around the walls. These were, however, empty, and two large cedar chests that stood in the middle of the floor seemed to contain all the household linen.

Mrs. Brent drew a key from her pocket and unlocked one of the chests, from which a heavy aromatic odor of sweet herbs and spices arose.

"I used to take out these things and air them every summer, but of late years, seeing that they never seemed to come into any use, I gave up doing that, and just contented myself with putting more dried lavender and basil in them every fall," she said, as she lifted out folded sheets, fine as cambric, yellow as saffron, and filled with the odor of sweet herbs.

"It is no use, honey," continued the housekeeper, "these here things are not fit to be used. They will

have to be washed and bleached first. I shall have to lend you some of mine. They are not so fine as these, but they are a deal whiter, so perhaps you will excuse them."

"I shall be very thankful for the loan of them, Mrs. Brent," said the young lady.

"Indeed you are welcome, my dear," replied the housekeeper, who was still looking over the contents of the cedar chest.

"Now, Mrs. Brent, I wish to ask you—have you never slept in this house since the night that—that Dyvyd Gryphyn was killed?"

"And his ghost appeared to us here? No, ma'am. Never since that night have I slept in this house. The officers of the law occupied it the next day, and after the inquest the undertaker had possession until the funeral. While that was going on I slept at my brother's house. Then I had the furniture of my part of the house moved down to the gate lodge, which was empty at that time, and I have lived there ever since; only, as I told you before, coming up here, in broad daylight, with a lot of the colored people to keep me in courage, while I had the house opened and aired. This I have done faithfully every week all the year round, ever since the last master's dreadful death."

"And you have never seen anything to recall the horrors of that night?"

"Not much, ma'am, because I have always visited it in broad daylight, as I have told you."

"Well, now that the place is thrown open to the sun and air, and Mr. Lindsay and myself are here to take possession, and your niece Philippa and a number of the colored servants, whom we shall bring in, you will not be afraid to join us?"

"You mean to come back and live here?" inquired the housekeeper, somewhat startled.

"Yes, to come and live here. I shall want a housekeeper in the house to look after the servants. I shall also need a matron, as a protector for myself during the absence of Mr. Lindsay; or, to speak more correctly, I should say, after the departure of Mr. Lindsay. I would give you for your sleeping-room, one of the best bed-chambers in the house, the next to my own, for company, and your niece could sleep with you for closer company. Come, what do you say?"

"Oh, ma'am, I know not what to say. Of course, I know that I must do one thing or the other. As long as you need a housekeeper in the house, I must either come and live here or else I must give up my situation and let some other woman take it who would come and live in the house. I have held the situation of housekeeper at Gryphynshold for twenty-five years, and I don't like to give up a post that I expected to live and die in; and, on the other hand, I am afeared to sleep in this house."

"Well, Mrs. Brent," said Gloria, with more firmness than she had ever given herself credit for possessing, "I do not wish to hurry you. Take your time to decide what you will do; but let me know your answer before Mr. Lindsay goes away; for it will be necessary for me to find some matronly protection before his departure."

"And dear me, that will be so soon," said the housekeeper.

"Yes; but listen. Your years of faithful service will not be forgotten. If you decide to leave me you shall have six months' wages in advance; but if you

decide to stay I will do anything in the world that I can do to make you happy."

"My dear young lady, would you let me try it a little while before deciding?" inquired the old housekeeper.

"How do you mean?" asked Gloria.

"Let me try if I can stay here. If nothing happens, such as happened on that horrible night, why, I might stay and spend the rest of my life here; but if anything of that sort should come again, if it shouldn't frighten me to death on the spot, it would, at least, scare me away from the house forever."

"Such a night of horror is not likely to return in our lifetime. I accept your terms, Mrs. Brent, and I am very glad to do so. I should dislike to lose you."

"Thanky, honey; so should I," replied the old woman, rather obscurely. Then: "When would you like me to come in, ma'am?" she inquired.

"As soon as you possibly can."

"Well, I think I can come to-day. As you were so kind as to say that you would give me a room next to your own, I shall not need to move the furniture from the lodge-house, as these rooms are already furnished. Now, honey, I'll go down and see to preparing the dinner."

"Thanks, and—please send your niece up to me, Mrs. Brent," said Gloria, who still shrank from a *tête-à-tête* with David Lindsay.

Philippa came dancing up stairs and into the room.

"There's an army in the old house, and I am afraid they'll rout the ghosts!" she exclaimed. "Just think of it! They have all the field negroes—who have not much to do outside at this season

of the year, you know—in the house, busy scrubbing, scouring, mopping, sweeping, dusting and what not.”

“Then they will get through all the sooner, for which I shall be very glad,” said Gloria.

“Oh, they will get through cleaning to-night! And then we shall have peace for some time; for they can’t begin any repairs until the spring, you know.”

“I don’t want any repairs. The house is wind and water proof, and that is all that is necessary besides cleanliness. Fresh paint and new wall paper would utterly spoil it.”

“I think this inroad of mops and brooms and scrubbing-brushes has spoiled it already. Oh, the poor ghosts! I am so sorry for the ghosts. Yes, and for myself, too. I was so in hopes of seeing a ghost,” sighed Philippa, with a look of downright disappointment.

“Why should you wish to see a ghost, if such a being ever exists?” inquired Gloria.

“Why, oh, why? Because the apparition of a real ghost would be proof positive of the life after death,” said Philippa, quite seriously.

“But your Christian faith should assure you of that, if you have faith.”

“Oh, yes, I have faith, of course I have faith. Why, I have been confirmed, child, so of course I have faith; but what I want is certainty. I want to see a ghost who can tell me all about it. There is nothing in this hum-drum world I should like so well as a good, comfortable, sitting down, leisurely gossip with a real ghost! Or a midnight visit from a departed spirit, who would take a chair at my

bedside and answer all my questions," said Philippa; and she looked as if she meant it.

"You would be frightened out of your wits!" exclaimed Gloria.

"Not I! What would I have to fear? Who ever heard of a ghost hurting anybody? Of all the absurd cowardice, I think the fear of ghosts must be the weakest! Why, if the very wickedest old Gryphyn that ever killed and ate his grandmother, was to appear to me and try to bulldoze me, all I would say would be—'Ah ha, old rooster! Your comb is cut now! Flesh and blood have no longer anything to fear from you! Clear out, or I will throw my prayer-book at your head'—for of course you know I wouldn't care about hearing what he could tell me of the other world! But, oh dear! there is not the slightest probability of interviewing a spirit, good or evil, now. These commonplace, unimaginative sweepers, and dusters, and moppers, and scrubbers have exorcised them all—unless—— Come with me, Madame Gloria. I will show you a place that they haven't invaded yet, and if that place is not consecrated or cursed to the use of ghosts, I'll give them up," said Philippa, suddenly rising.

Gloria, carried away by the impetuosity of her companion, arose and followed her.

Philippa led the way down stairs and down the main hall to a side door that opened into a long, dark, narrow passage leading through an ell of the building.

At the end of this she opened another door leading down a deep and narrow flight of stairs to a dark cellar.

At the foot of these stairs she stopped and said :

"Wait. I brought a piece of candle with me and a match. We must have a light before we go a step farther."

And while Gloria stood there, Philippa snapped a match and lighted the end of the tallow candle, which, however, only showed a small ray in the midst of the deep darkness.

They stepped down now upon the flagstone floor of the cellar, which seemed quite dry. Groping along with their feeble light, they explored the walls, which were arched and divided into bins and niches—some of them with rusty iron doors—places which made the two girls shudder.

In one corner of this place they found a door which, when they opened it, revealed, in the dim light of the candle, a ladder leading down to a subterranean room below the cellar.

"Oh, look here!" whispered Philippa. "Look here! In the deepest deep a deeper deep!"

"Oh, come away! Come away! Come away directly and shut the door! There is a dreadful air arises from that place!" exclaimed Gloria, shrinking back.

"'Come away,' indeed! Not much! I am going down these stairs to see what is at the bottom. You can stay here until I come back, but I cannot leave you the candle, you know," obstinately replied the stubborn girl.

In vain Gloria sought to dissuade her from her purpose. She was as stubborn and intractable as a young mule, and she began to go down the ladder.

Gloria, seeing her so determined, had no other alternative but to follow her willful guide.

A foul air, impregnated with must and mould and dampness, met them. They could scarcely

breathe, the candle could scarcely burn in the impure, oppressive atmosphere.

"Oh, if you would only not persist," moaned Gloria, as holding on to the sides of the ladder, she groped her way down after her conductor.

"But I must persist," replied Philippa, who had now reached the bottom.

With some danger and difficulty Gloria descended the ladder and stood by her side.

The feeble rays of the candle showed but a small circle of light just around them. All beyond was utter darkness.

Suddenly Gloria grasped the arm of her companion and shuddered.

"What's the matter?" demanded Philippa.

"Listen!"

"What?"

"Don't you hear something?"

"No!"

"Oh, listen! There it is again!"

"What, I say?"

"That moaning, gurgling sound, as of some one strangling and groaning!"

"Oh, that is the sound of some subterranean, pent-up stream. I have found such in the caves under these mountains, and I have heard that the foundations of this house communicate with a chain of caverns opening from one into another under the whole breadth of the mountain base, and more than one stream of water must traverse them," said Philippa.

"Then this is a very dangerous place! This is far down under the deepest foundations of the house, and in this utter darkness we might step into a stream of water, and be swept away and drowned.

And oh! of all the gates that lead into the other life, a black water gate must be the most appalling! Do come back, Philippa!"

"I cannot! Something draws me on! But you keep behind me. I will go on before. If I should disappear, either down into a cave or into a subterranean stream, do you turn and go back to the upper world by the way you came."

"This is foolish, foolhardy, wicked, Philippa."

"I know it is, but I cannot help it. Something draws me on, I tell you!" exclaimed the willful creature. And at the same moment she stumbled, recovered herself, and held the candle close to the ground to see what the obstacle had been.

"Oh, gracious Heaven, what is this?" cried Philippa, in a tone of sickening horror, as she recoiled from the object.

"What is it?" whispered Gloria, in a frightened voice.

"Look! Look!" gasped Philippa.

Gloria caught the candle from the girl's shaking hand, held it down, peered into the obscurity, and instantly sprang back with a piercing shriek.

They were on the very brink of a black torrent that rushed along through the depths of a deep and yawning gulch. Another moment—another step, and they must have plunged down the precipice into the dark water of that buried river, and been whirled on to destruction in the darkest depths of the abyss.

But it was not even that impending doom that had appalled them!

It was the dire object that rose from the earth on the bank of the chasm!

For a moment they stood clinging together, half

petrified, and then, without a word, turned and fled to the foot of the ladder, and climbed it with tumultuous haste. On reaching the cellar over this cavern, they hurried across it to the door leading up stairs to the back building communicating with the house.

Pale, breathless, trembling, they at length found themselves in the great hall, with its doors and windows open to the wholesome sun and air, and cheerful wood fires burning in the broad fire-places.

CHAPTER XXIV

HORROR

This chamber is the ghostly!

HOOD.

"OH, Madame Gloria! I've done bragging! I'll never brag any more! I did pray to my guardian angel if he'd save my life and reason until I could get out of that place I would never brag any more!" exclaimed Philippa, with a hysterical laugh, as she dropped on one of the rude oak benches in the hall.

"Oh, Philippa, don't speak so lightly of that awful——" cried Gloria, suddenly stopping and covering her pallid face with both hands, as she, too, sank upon a seat.

"Lightly? Gracious Heaven! I don't speak lightly! All my boasted courage has come out in a cold sweat that trickles like ice water all down my spine! Madame Gloria, I would rather have seen the blackest evil spirit from the abyss, all alone at midnight, than that horrid—— Ugh-h-h!"

"Philippa! for Heaven's sake, don't speak of it now, or evermore! You are a brave girl——"

"I will never say so after this. I'm conquered quite!" shuddered the willful creature.

"You have seen what would have shaken the nerves of the boldest man; it is no wonder that you are overcome as well as myself. But, Philippa, I beg you, for my sake, never mention to a human being what we have seen below. If it were once known what our eyes have beheld—what rises from the brink of that subterranean black river—the horror below the foundation of these walls—no living being could be induced to remain in the house with us."

"Shall you remain?" whispered Philippa.

"Yes."

"Oh, why?"

"Because I said I would, and I should be ashamed to retract. I will not be ejected, even by that appalling—— Oh! let us not speak of it, even to each other. And never, never to any one else. Your aunt would never come near the house, even by day, if she knew of that dire presence below, and I wish her to remain with us, Philippa. I say 'us,' because I feel sure that you will stay with me."

"Yes, I will stay and I will keep the secret," whispered the girl.

"The cellar and the horrible cave below it, with the black river, have long been disused, if ever, indeed, they were used at all. I will have the two doors at the head of the two flights of stairs leading down to the abyss nailed up to-day. The foul air from below will be excuse enough for that."

"There be some that cannot be kept out by locks, or bolts, or bars, or nailed-up doors—no, nor even

by tons of stone and earth! And of such was what we saw!"

"Oh, hush, hush, hush! Why do you dwell upon that? Oh, that we both could drink of the waters of Lethe and forget it!" whispered Gloria, as she covered her face with her hands and shuddered.

At this moment a lucky interruption ended their dismal conversation.

Mrs. Brent came walking briskly from one of the side rooms, saying:

"Come, now, ma'am, dinner is ready—not such a dinner as I hope to set before you every day for the future, but just such a one as I could get up under the circumstances to-day."

"I have no doubt it will be delicious and just what we like. As for me, I prefer what are called 'picked up dinners'—simple little dishes. The sight of big joints takes away my appetite," said Gloria, as she arose and followed her conductress into the room from which the latter had emerged.

It was the front room on the left-hand side of the hall—a large room, with an oak floor uncarpeted, stone walls unplastered, two tall front windows, uncurtained, and a broad fireplace, where blazed a rousing, fragrant fire of pine and cedar wood.

An oaken table, covered with a coarse, clean white cloth, stood in the middle of the room, set for dinner; two oaken chairs were placed for the master and mistress of the house.

David Lindsay stood before the fire, but on seeing Gloria, came forward to meet her.

"You look pale and worried," he said, as he took her hand.

"Yes, I have been going over the house and I feel tired," she replied.

"And hungry, I hope, to do justice to the dainty repast Mrs. Brent has prepared for us," he added, as he led her to the table and drew out her chair.

"Now come, Mrs. Brent and Philippa, you must both sit down and dine with us to-day. Don't let it be said that we had to take our dinner alone on the first day of our arrival at home," said Gloria.

David Lindsay immediately arose and placed two more chairs at the table.

"Oh, we couldn't think of it, ma'am, indeed!" answered the housekeeper, drawing away.

Gloria urged and David pleaded, but Mrs. Brent persisted in her refusal, until at length Gloria got up and left the table, saying:

"Very well, then, I will not eat a single morsel of dinner until you and Phil join us."

"Oh, I'll submit at once, laughed Philippa, taking one of the vacant chairs.

"Do, Mrs. Brent, humor the fancy of our willful little lady," said David Lindsay, as he arose and placed his hand on the back of another chair, inviting the old woman to take it.

"You are a couple of spoiled children, that's what you are, and you ought both to be at school instead of being married, and that is the fact," laughed the housekeeper, as, not really unwillingly, she took her place at the table with the genial young pair.

"Now, that is settled. The precedent—don't they call it a precedent in the courts of law, David?—the precedent is established. Henceforth you are to take your meals with us, dear Mrs. Brent, just as if you were our mother, and Philippa were our sister; for we have neither mother nor sister on this earth—I mean David nor I—and, besides, really, we four are too few to be separated in this

lonesome place," said the little lady of the house, as she settled herself to enjoy her dinner as well as she could under the circumstances and the memory of the afternoon's horror.

It was a very limited dinner, consisting of just what was at hand and could be cooked in a hurry; but it was a very dainty dinner, notwithstanding; there were delicious broiled venison steaks, light biscuits, fresh butter, a baked custard, preserved mountain cherries, tea, coffee and cream.

David Lindsay and Mrs. Brent fully appreciated the good things, and proved that they did so.

But neither Gloria nor Philippa could so far overcome the effect of that ghastly terror in the cave as to relish anything that was set before them.

As this late meal was to serve as both dinner and supper for the small household on this day of bustle, they sat rather long at the table, not leaving it, in fact, until the short tallow candles that had been placed upon it began to burn low in their sockets.

Then David Lindsay and Gloria withdrew from the dining-room and went into the parlor on the opposite side of the hall.

There, also, a fine fire was burning, and a table was drawn up before the hearth, flanked by two straight-backed, chip-bottomed chairs.

"What would Miss Agrippina de Crespigny say, if she could have seen her niece, the 'Countess Gloria,' sitting down at the table with her house-keeper?" inquired David Lindsay, with a smile, as they seated themselves near the fire.

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, drop that! I never was intended for a fine lady, David Lindsay—never!—much less for a countess! I love people, David

Lindsay. I never want to keep them at a distance. I want to draw them closer to me," she murmured, in a tender tone, with her eyes fixed dreamily upon the fire.

"Then love me, draw me nearer to you, and my life's devotion shall be yours," was in his heart and almost on his lips to say; but he put away the selfish thought and continued silent.

It was growing late, and they were both very tired.

Gloria was the first to rise.

"Good-night, David Lindsay," she said as she took one of the tallow candles from the chimney shelf to light her steps.

"Good-night," he answered, in gentle tones.

"Your room," she resumed, and then she hesitated, holding the candle in her hand and looking down on the floor—"your room is the one over the dining-room. You will find everything prepared there for your comfort."

"I thank you—very much," answered the young man, in a low and broken voice.

"Good-night," she said, still hesitating.

"Good-night, lady dear."

"God—bless—you, David Lindsay," she added, faltering.

"And you, too! God bless you, Gloria," he answered.

She went out of the room; but as she turned to shut the door, she caught sight of his face. It wore a look of weary sorrow, such as he never would have willingly permitted her to see; and suddenly she sat down her candle on the hall bench, ran back into the room, threw her arms around his

neck and kissed his forehead, sobbing forth the words:

"Oh, David Lindsay, I am so sorry—so sorry! But I can't help it. Indeed, I can't, dear David Lindsay!"

With a look of ineffable tenderness, he put his arm around her waist and drew her close to his heart, and would have returned her kiss, but she suddenly broke from him, and ran out of the room. She caught up her candle from the hall table, flew up stairs to her own chamber, shut the door, and flung herself down on the bed in a passion of tears.

"Oh-h-h! what a hard, cold, proud wretch I am! What a cruel, wicked, unnatural monster! But I cannot help it! I cannot! I don't want to be married—I do not. I love David Lindsay! I do love him, dearly, dearly, dearly; I always did love him better than anybody else in the whole world. Ah! who is so good and grand as he is, within himself? No one that I ever saw in this world. No one that I ever read of. But I don't want to be his wife! I don't want to be anybody's wife! Oh, I wish I had stayed at the Sacred Heart, with the quiet sisters there!"

She was interrupted in her passionate vehemence of self-reproaches and lamentations by the sound of light footsteps and cheerful voices approaching her door, and finally by a rapping at the same.

She arose, composed herself as well as she could and went and opened to Mrs. Brent and Philippa, who had come to bid her good-night, and to ask if she would need anything more before they should retire to bed.

Gloria thanked them and said that she would require nothing.

"And if you should, you have only to knock on the door between us to let me know, for you see our room is just back of yours here," added the housekeeper.

"I will remember," replied Gloria, in a low tone.

"I suppose Mr. Lindsay will not want anything. I reckon he'll be up before long. I left him sitting before the big parlor fire," remarked Mrs. Brent.

"I dare say," answered Gloria, so wearily that the housekeeper bade her good-night and retired, followed by Philippa, who, since their fearful adventure in the cavern under the cellar, had been strangely silent and reserved.

Gloria locked her door leading into the hall and bolted the one leading into the rear room occupied by the housekeeper.

Then she replenished her fire from a box of wood that sat on one side of the hearth, and also threw on a number of resinous pine knots and cones, that their bright blaze might light up the large, gloomy chamber.

Having done this, she proceeded to examine her room more carefully than she had yet done.

It was one of the two front and principal bed-chambers in the house, being immediately above, and of the same dimensions with the "big parlor" below. And, with the exception of the bed, which, in all its appointments, was very good, it was as rudely furnished. The walls and floor were perfectly bare. The windows were without curtains or shades, but were provided with unpainted oak shutters which closed from the outside. These two front windows faced the east; between them stood an old oaken chest of drawers surmounted by a hanging mirror, so mildewed as to be scarcely use-

ful. Each side of this old piece of furniture stood a high-backed, chip-bottomed chair, one under each window.

On the south side of the room was the broad open fire-place, with deep closets in the recesses on the right and left.

On the west side was the high four-post bedstead, with its head against the partition wall, and its foot opposite the windows. On the side nearest the fire-place was the door leading into the rear room.

On the north side was the door opening into the hall. In the corner between this hall door and the head of the bed was an old-fashioned piece of furniture of black walnut that reached from the lofty ceiling to the floor, and might have been a book-case, a clothes-press, a cabinet, or the three in one; for the long, heavy black doors hanging open disclosed closets within closets, and shelves and drawers and pigeon-holes innumerable, and of all shapes and sizes. Yellow papers protruded from many compartments.

Gloria made up her mind to investigate this ancient secretary at her leisure the next day.

Then, having offered up her evening prayers and thanksgivings, she went to bed, and, notwithstanding care and anxiety, she soon fell asleep.

David Lindsay sat long over the fire in the big parlor; not until all the household had been for hours in deep repose did he rouse himself to go to the chamber allotted to him over the dining-room.

This was a large, square room, in all respects a counterpart of the one on the opposite side of the hall occupied by Gloria. It was furnished in the same rude style.

The only difference was that this room was with-

out the huge old *escritoire*, or secretary, that stood in the other.

David Lindsay did not replenish his fire. It was nearly out, so he covered it up, blew out his snuff of candle, and retired to bed; but not to sleep—at least, for a long time.

He was as nearly heart-broken, poor fellow, as any youthful lover ever was. His pride was struggling with the sense of disappointment, humiliation and sorrow that seemed to be rushing him into despair. He felt sure that if his capricious but tender bride knew the tithe of his sufferings, she would give herself to him; but not to her pity could he bear to owe his love. He must accept his fate, rather than lose his self-respect; must see her in safety, and then depart.

But how to secure her safety? That was the question that kept him awake so long.

At length, weary mind and body succumbed to sleep.

Then a very strange thing happened.

How long he had slept, he knew not; at what time he awoke, or whether he really did awake, or only dreamt, he never could tell; but it seemed to him that he was gently aroused from a deep and dreamless sleep, by the touch of a soft hand on his face, and the tone of a soft voice in his ear.

"Who is there?" he murmured, only half conscious.

The sweet, low-toned, pathetic voice answered: "It is I, your mother. David Gryphyn, arise, go hence, get to your home. My mother has somewhat to say to you."

The soft voice, breathing flute-like over him, held

his soul in a spell of silence and repose until it ceased.

Then, wondering, he started up as from a dream.

The room was perfectly dark, but he groped his way to the mantelpiece, where he had left the tallow-candle and the box of matches, and he struck a light. And still in great agitation, he went to both the chamber doors—the one leading into the hall, and the one leading into the rear room—and examined them. They were both securely locked and bolted as he had left them.

Then he went to the front windows, hoisted them, and threw open the heavy oaken shutters. A flood of light burst into the room. He found, to his surprise, that it was broad day and the sun was rising.

CHAPTER XXV

“WAS IT A DREAM?”

Spirits have oftentimes descended
Upon our slumbers, and the blessed ones
Have in the calm and quiet of the soul
Conversed with us. SHIRLEY.

SUNSHINE flowed into the room, filling it with dazzling light. Yet David Lindsay, after having opened the shutters and let down the window-sashes, stood in the middle of the floor, gazing down like one still half entranced, with the impression of that soft touch still on his brow, and the melody of that tender voice still in his ear.

"Was it a dream?" he murmured to himself. "Could it have been a dream? No dream I ever had was ever so like reality. Or could some dreaming sleep-walker have entered my chamber and saluted me? Impossible! Yet, let me examine the doors once more."

He roused himself, and went again to investigate the fastenings on the only two outlets from the room—the first leading into the hall, and the second into the rear room.

He found them both securely locked and bolted, and, moreover, the locks and bolts were both so strong and so rusty that they required some considerable exertion to move them.

No one could have entered through the doors, that was certain.

He looked into both closets that flanked the fireplace, but the bare plastered walls and oaken shelves afforded no opportunity of concealment or of passage.

Every other nook and corner of the room was clearly visible in the bright sunshine. Even the space under the high bedstead was a vista. The plastered walls of the room, like those of the closets, gave no chance of a sliding panel for entrance or exit through a secret passage. Nor could any one have come in or gone out through the windows, which, besides having been securely fastened with oaken shutters secured by strong and rusty iron hooks and bolts, were full fifty feet above the ground, with a sheer descent of stone wall below them, and no tree, or vine, or porch, or balcony to assist the climber.

No! it was utterly and entirely impossible that any human being, besides himself, could have been

concealed in the room when he went to bed, or could have entered it afterward.

And yet he had been awakened from a deep and dreamless sleep by a light touch on his forehead, and had perceived a benignant presence that he could not see, a presence which, to his half-conscious question of "Who is there?" had answered in murmuring music, soft as the notes of an Æolian harp:

"It is I, your mother. David Gryphyn, arise, and go hence; get to your home—my mother has somewhat to say to you."

And the soft voice sunk into silence, and when he started up and opened the window shutters, letting in the rays of the rising sun, there was nothing to be seen but the great bare walls and floor of the room, with its scant and rude furniture.

David Lindsay sat down on one of the rough chairs, and took his head between his hands to think it over. He could make nothing of it. The voice had said: "It is I, your mother." But the voice was not at all like that of his mother, as he remembered hers. Again, the mysterious visitant had said, "David Gryphyn." But his name was not David Gryphyn; it was David Lindsay. Finally, it had concluded with these unaccountable words—"Go hence and get to your home, for my mother has somewhat to communicate to you." But his mother had no mother living on this earth, he knew. His mother had been an orphan when his father, James Lindsay, had married her. The old woman at his home, Dame Lindsay, was his grandmother on his father's side.

The dream, or vision, strange and real and superhuman as it seemed, was an absurdly mixed-up

affair, caused, no doubt, by confused memories and thoughts jumbled up together in his disturbed brain. So David Lindsay said to himself, yet he could not shake off the supernatural, perhaps even the superstitious, effects left upon his mind.

He had been moving about and then sitting still in the cold room, just as he had jumped out of bed. He had been too much absorbed by his strange subject of thought to feel the chill that was creeping upon him.

Now, however, as he aroused himself from useless reverie, he shivered and shook as with an ague, and hastened to the hearth and uncovered the smouldering coals and brands, and threw upon them several handfuls of resinous pine cones and knots taken from a box in the corner, and upon them several cedar sticks and logs from a pile in the opposite corner, that soon blazed up, filling the room with an agreeable warmth and pleasant fragrance.

Then he dressed himself and went out.

There was no one in the hall outside the bed-chambers, so he could not tell whether he was not the only one up in this strange house.

He passed down stairs and found the fires burning brightly in the broad front and back fire-places in the hall, but still no one was to be seen.

He entered the "big parlor," and found another pine fire there, but the room was empty.

In the spirit of restlessness he wandered into every room on that floor, finding every one well warmed by great open fires of costly logs—costly in every other locality, but cheap enough, because plenty enough on Cedar Mountain.

These numerous fires were needed now, and

would be needed for some time yet, to correct the dampness and bad air of the long-deserted house.

Last of all he wandered into the dining-room where they had taken dinner and tea in one on the preceding day.

Here the table was drawn up before the bright, blazing fire, and neatly set for breakfast.

“What a home this is for Gloria to come to! What a strange fascination it is that brings her here and keeps her here. Why, our poor little cottage on Sandy Isle is a civilized and refined home compared to this! And we have the small comforts of life and a few books and a few little ornaments. And Promontory Hall is a queen’s palace to this. For here, in this unfinished and almost unfurnished place, there is not a papered wall, not a single carpet, nor a curtain, nor a picture, nor a cast, nor a book to be seen. It supplies only an inventory of negations. How can she stay here? But there is one good in the place. She is as safe here, perhaps safer here with Mrs. Brent, than she would be anywhere else; for I am not sure, if she were within the reach of her half-crazy guardian, that her marriage would be any protection against his persecution. Finding out this marriage to have been only a form, he might choose to ignore it and urge upon her the expediency of having it legally annulled. I cannot trust an infatuated man without religious principles to restrain him. Yes, she is better here for the present, and if I could get Miss de Crespigny to join her here, it would be the best thing that could happen for her; for Miss Agrippina is too strictly principled not to hold to the sanctity of marriage vows, even in such a case as ours, and she would be now the best protection for my un-

loving bride. I will try to get Miss Agrippina to come to her, even if I have to brave that lady's rage."

So mused David Lindsay, sitting before the dining-room fire, until he was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Brent, bringing a coffee-pot in her hands and followed by a negro man with a large dish of broiled partridges.

"Dear me! Good morning, sir! You here! I was just a going to send Hector to let you know breakfast was ready; for as I didn't see you in the big parlor with Mrs. Lindsay, I thought you were still in your room," said the good woman.

"I have been down some time; but there was no one in the parlor when I looked in."

"Mrs. Lindsay has only been there for a few minutes, sir. Here she comes now! Now, Hector, bring in the muffins."

Gloria entered at the same moment.

David Lindsay arose and placed a chair for her. They only said good-morning to each other by a look.

The last dishes were set on the board, Philippa joined them, and they all sat down to the table, the girl just nodding by way of a morning salutation.

"I hope you slept well, ma'am?" said Mrs. Brent, interrogatively.

"Profoundly. I never even dreamed or stirred until morning! If there be a ghost about the house it didn't disturb me," answered Gloria.

"Well, I suppose I should have slept quietly enough too, if it hadn't been for Philly! She kept jumping and starting, and talking, and crying out the live-long night," said the housekeeper.

Gloria looked at her young companion and saw that she was pale and anxious, yet Gloria did not dare to ask the reason, lest "Philly" should blurt out something about the ghastly apparition that had appalled them in the cavern.

But Philippa spoke for herself.

"It was too much supper and the nightmare," she explained, with serio-comic gravity.

As soon as breakfast was over, Gloria left the table and retreated into the big parlor, followed by David Lindsay.

Gloria had unpacked some materials for the silk embroidery which she liked so well to do. Now she had brought some down to the parlor with her, and she sat down and began to arrange it for work.

"If I were not still so extremely tired with my week's rumbling over rough roads, I should like to go out to-day and explore some of this magnificent mountain scenery," she said, as she threaded her needle.

"What? In paths covered deep in snow and ice?" queried David Lindsay, as he stood on the hearth with his elbow leaning on the mantelpiece.

"Yes! It is not the condition of the ground that would prevent me! It is my own state. I feel as weary and worn out as if I were seventy years old instead of seventeen. In fact, I feel my fatigue even more to-day than I did yesterday."

"I am sorry to hear that. I had hoped that you had quite recovered. You said that you had slept so soundly."

"That was from my deep weariness. Yes, I slept 'like death' all night. But I will venture to say that you did not, David Lindsay. You look as if you

had been interviewed by an unpleasant ghost?" said Gloria lightly.

"I have!" replied David Lindsay, with an assumed solemnity that imposed upon his companion.

"WHAT!"

"I have."

"Do you know what I asked you?"

"Yes."

"And you say you have?"

"Yes."

"Been interviewed by a ghost?"

"Yes."

"Oh, David Lindsay, what do you mean?" demanded Gloria, in wonder and perplexity.

"My dear little lady, I mean very much of what I have said," he gravely replied.

"Do explain yourself. Have you seen or heard anything extraordinary in this strange house?"

"My dear lady, yes, I have. Last night, or rather early this morning, I had an extraordinary dream, or vision—no, not vision, for I saw nothing—but visitation, for I both felt and heard the presence," said the young man, as seriously as before.

"Now, are you in earnest? But of course you are. You would not jest on such a subject."

"I am not jesting," said the young man, gently. "Yet it would seem absurd to be in earnest about the matter. In truth, I am perplexed. For, dear Gloria, I am not ready to deny or utterly disbelieve in the possibility of communication between the natural and the spiritual world—in the face of so much evidence from tradition and history and even from the Word of the Lord. What I experienced last night would have almost persuaded me to believe in the possible return of departed spirits, but

for some strange inconsistency in the communication made me."

"Tell me all about it, David Lindsay," exclaimed Gloria, dropping her work upon her lap and gazing up at him.

"Last night, after I went to my room, I locked and bolted both the doors and hooked and bolted both pairs of window-shutters. Then I went to bed, and towards morning fell into a deep and dreamless sleep, such as would naturally follow the last week of excessive fatigue."

"Like mine, yes."

"From that death-like sleep I was gently but completely awakened by feeling a light hand laid on my forehead. 'Who is there?' I called. A low, tender, flute-like voice replied: 'It is I, your mother. David Gryphyn, arise and go hence—get to your home. My mother has somewhat to say to you.'"

"Gracious Heaven, David Lindsay, do you tell me that!" exclaimed Gloria, turning pale.

"Yes, but whether this was a dream or a visitation, I cannot tell you. I must say it was more like a visitation."

"What did you do or say?"

"Nothing at first. I felt spell-bound—dumfounded."

"Did you see this mysterious visitant?"

"No, I only felt her hand on my forehead and heard her voice in my ears."

"Did she speak again?"

"No."

"Then what did you do?"

"I sprang out of bed and threw open the window-shutters. The sun was rising and filled the room

full of light. I searched the place thoroughly, and found no one; examined the doors, and found them securely locked and bolted as I had left them on the previous night."

"And so you were convinced that no one was concealed in your chamber, or could have entered it during the night."

"Yes, I am convinced of that."

"David Lindsay, what do you think of this yourself?"

"I do not know what to think. It was less like a dream than like a real visitation."

"Was the mysterious visitant like your mother?"

"I repeat that I did not see the visitant at all. I felt her hand upon my forehead. I heard her voice in my ear. That was all. But I must say that though she called herself my mother, her hand felt much smaller, slenderer, softer and lighter than my poor mother's hand, which was large and hard and roughened by coarse work; her voice also was fine and flute-like, whereas my dear mother's voice was deep and strong. No! though I did not see my mysterious visitant, I perceived that she must have been a very opposite person to my own poor mother."

"Yet she said she was your mother, and her mother had somewhat to say to you."

"Yes, which is an inconsistency with fact; for my poor mother was an orphan from her youth."

"And she called you David Gryphyn."

"Yes, another inconsistency, since my name is David Lindsay—these two incoherencies favor the theory that my possible supernatural experience was nothing more than a very distinct dream; for you know dreams are notoriously incoherent."

"Yes, I know all that; but still, David Lindsay, I think there must be something more than a commonplace dream in what you have just told me. You have not heard from Dame Lindsay since we left ten days ago, have you?"

"No. I wrote to her from Washington, and again from Staunton; but of course you know there has been no chance of hearing from her."

"And she is old and infirm. She may be ill or dying. David Lindsay, I hope you will set out and return to her as soon as possible."

"I shall leave here to-morrow. But, my dear lady, you should have some better protection here than your housekeeper and servants. Did you not tell me that Miss de Crespigny would be in Washington by the first of February?"

"Yes. Why do you ask?"

"Because I think she would be the most desirable companion that you could have here, and I think if she knew your condition she would come to you."

"Oh, yes! I know she would! Well thought of, David Lindsay! Aunt Agrippina was to have been in Washington this month. The month is nearly out now. After the commencement of Lent she will not care to stay in the city, as she never goes to any place of amusement during that season, so it will be no sacrifice on her part to leave Washington," said Gloria, with animation.

"Then as I go through the city, I will find out where her party is stopping, and call and see her."

"Yes, David Lindsay, and take a letter from me."

"If you wish."

"Yes, I do; for I must tell her how it all was, and she will understand better than most people would."

the straits to which I have been driven! She knows Marcel and she knows me, and, moreover, she would have considered it a mortal sin for me to have married my Uncle Marcel. I will go and get out my writing materials, and commence the letter at once," she exclaimed, rolling up her embroidery and rising to leave the room; but looking up, she met the eyes of the young man fixed on her, and full of the disappointment and sorrow that he could not always banish from them.

"Oh, David Lindsay, can you ever forgive me for the great wrong I have done you?" she cried, dropping into her chair again and covering her face with both hands.

He did not say that there was nothing to forgive; that no wrong had been done him; he could not speak so falsely even to soothe her whom he loved so fondly and so unselfishly. He had been asked to marry her, and then had been rejected at the altar. He had been deprived of his liberty, and then bitterly disappointed and humiliated. This was a deep wrong, and he felt it very acutely. He could not soothe her by any smooth denial that it was so, yet neither did he reproach her even in his thoughts.

When she dropped her hands upon her lap, revealing her tear-stained face and repeated her question:

"Oh, David Lindsay, can you ever, ever forgive me, for the great wrong I have done you?" his heart melted with tenderness towards her, he knelt by her side, took her limp hands in his own, looked up in her woeful little face—his own fine face full of the heavenly light of self-renunciation, and said:

"Whatever there may be to forgive, dearest, I

forgive with all my heart and soul. I love you too deeply and truly to feel a shade of anger towards you. Never, even in my thoughts, have I blamed you."

"Oh, you are so good and great-hearted, David Lindsay! And I have, in my impulsive selfishness, so spoiled your life! Married you and then refused to be your wife, and put it out of your power to wed any other woman!" she cried, weeping bitterly.

"No, Gloria, no, dear, do not reproach yourself with that last consequence, for it is not true. I love you only, and have loved you only all the days of my life. I could not, and cannot change. So even if I had not married you I could never have married any other woman. Put that cause of self-reproach out of your mind, Gloria."

She was crying so convulsively that she could not speak for some time. When she could, her hands clasped his, and she sobbed forth:

"And I love you, David Lindsay! Oh, I do! I do! I do! I do love you, so dearly! You feel so near to me, David Lindsay; just like my own heart and soul; but I don't want to be married! That is, I know I am married, but I don't want to be!"

He made no sort of reply to this tirade.

"Oh, David Lindsay, I don't want you to go and leave me, either. I don't! What should I do without you now? I should cry myself blind! Oh, David Lindsay, how unhappy we are!"

"There is a wall between us, dear. I know not what it is, but I feel it bitterly. It may be the wall of caste or prejudice. I would it were down."

"Ah, Heaven, so do I! Oh, dear David Lindsay, don't go and leave me. Stay with me, and let us be just like brother and sister. Say, darling old play-

mate, won't you stay and be my brother?" she pleaded, taking his head between her little hands, and laying her face against his forehead.

Now, if he had been a hypocrite, or even a diplomatist, he would have accepted these terms, and trusted to time to win the entire heart of his bride. But he was too honest, open and straightforward, and though his frame shook with emotion, and his voice was well-nigh suffocated, he answered firmly:

"No, Gloria. No, dearest. What you ask is beyond human nature; or, at least, beyond mine."

She cried hard for a few minutes, and then suddenly clasped his head again as he knelt beside her, dropped her own upon it, and sobbed forth her submission:

"Well, then take me! Take me! I will keep my vow! I will be your wife, David Lindsay!"

And now if his great love had not been utterly without self-love he would have taken her at her word.

But, still shaking with a storm of emotion, still speaking in an almost expiring voice, he answered:

"It is your pity that speaks now, my dearest. You feel grieved for me, and in the pity of your heart you are willing to give up all your late repugnance, and sacrifice yourself to my happiness. Yes, even as you once feared you would do in the case of your guardian——"

"But oh, David Lindsay, it is so different! It would have been a mortal sin for me to have been Marcel's wife. It seems to me now it would be a sin not to be yours!" wept Gloria.

"You think and speak on an impulse, dearest, that you would repent. You would be sure to repent it; and then, Gloria, I should be most wretched

indeed. No, love, I must not take advantage of this pity you feel, for it is nothing else, Gloria. Tomorrow I must leave you. It is my duty to do so. I will send your aunt, Miss de Crespigny, to you——”

“Oh! David Lindsay, but my heart will break!”

“No, no, love! Listen to me. Try yourself, dearest. Find out what will make you happy. Now you suffer from a generous, tender sympathy with me, which is not love, not the love the soul craves, and you think I will be unhappy. I shall not be so, dearest. I shall be actively engaged in doing my duty.”

“Oh, but it is not only for you, David Lindsay, it is for myself that I am grieving. I shall miss you so much!”

“Because I have been with you for nearly two weeks, and you have no one else, except these strangers. But, Gloria, in a short time your aunt will be here.”

“But she will not be you!” wailed the girl.

“Listen further. If, when you have got over this pang of parting, and have lived some little time under the influence of your aunt, you should then, after calm reflection, feel that you could be happy with me, write and recall me, and I will be at your feet again, as I am now.”

He had controlled himself by a great and sustained exertion of his will, and she at last grew quieter under his influence.

“Dear David Lindsay,” she said, with a final sob and sigh, “go, if you feel that you must go, and put me on this probation, if you think I need it! But I shall soon write and beg you to come back to me.

Be sure of that! And you will come just as soon as I send for you, will you not?"

"Just as soon as you write for me," he answered.

"And oh, David Lindsay, if I thought you wouldn't—if I thought that anything could happen to prevent you from coming back to me—I could never bear to see you go. It would break my heart. You will come back to me? Tell me again."

"I will come back as soon as you send for me."

THE END

[The sequel to this story is published in another volume, entitled "David Lindsay," in uniform style and price with this book.]

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DARNLEY. A Romance of the times of Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey. By G. P. R. James. Cloth, 12mo. with four illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

In point of publication, "Darnley" is that work by Mr. James which follows "Richelieu," and, if rumor can be credited, it was owing to the advice and insistence of our own Washington Irving that we are indebted primarily for the story, the young author questioning whether he could properly paint the difference in the characters of the two great cardinals. And it is not surprising that James should have hesitated; he had been eminently successful in giving to the world the portrait of Richelieu as a man, and by attempting a similar task with Wolsey as the theme, was much like tempting fortune. Irving insisted that "Darnley" came naturally in sequence, and this opinion being supported by Sir Walter Scott, the author set about the work.

As a historical romance "Darnley" is a book that can be taken up pleasurably again and again, for there is about it that subtle charm which those who are strangers to the works of G. P. R. James have claimed was only to be imparted by Dumas.

If there was nothing more about the work to attract especial attention, the account of the meeting of the kings on the historic "field of the cloth of gold" would entitle the story to the most favorable consideration of every reader.

There is really but little pure romance in this story, for the author has taken care to imagine love passages only between those whom history has credited with having entertained the tender passion one for another, and he succeeds in making such lovers as all the world must love.

CAPTAIN BRAND, OF THE SCHOONER CENTIPEDE. By Lieut. Henry A. Wise, U.S.N. (Harry Gringo). Cloth, 12mo. with four illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

The re-publication of this story will please those lovers of sea yarns who delight in so much of the salty flavor of the ocean as can come through the medium of a printed page, for never has a story of the sea and those "who go down in ships" been written by one more familiar with the scenes depicted.

The one book of this gifted author which is best remembered, and which will be read with pleasure for many years to come, is "Captain Brand," who, as the author states on his title page, was a "pirate of eminence in the West Indies." As a sea story pure and simple, "Captain Brand" has never been excelled, and as a story of piratical life, told without the usual embellishments of blood and thunder, it has no equal.

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GUY FAWKES. A Romance of the Gunpowder Treason. By Wm. Harrison Ainsworth. Cloth, 12mo. with four illustrations by George Cruikshank. Price, \$1.00.

The "Gunpowder Plot" was a modest attempt to blow up Parliament, the King and his Counsellors. James of Scotland, then King of England, was weak-minded and extravagant. He hit upon the efficient scheme of extorting money from the people by imposing taxes on the Catholics. In their natural resentment to this extortion, a handful of bold spirits concluded to overthrow the government. Finally the plotters were arrested, and the King put to torture Guy Fawkes and the other prisoners with royal vigor. A very intense love story runs through the entire romance.

THE SPIRIT OF THE BORDER. A Romance of the Early Settlers in the Ohio Valley. By Zane Grey. Cloth, 12mo. with four illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

A book rather out of the ordinary is this "Spirit of the Border." The main thread of the story has to do with the work of the Moravian missionaries in the Ohio Valley. Incidentally the reader is given details of the frontier life of those hardy pioneers who broke the wilderness for the planting of this great nation. Chief among these, as a matter of course, is Lewis Wetzel, one of the most peculiar, and at the same time the most admirable of all the brave men who spent their lives battling with the savage foe, that others might dwell in comparative security.

Details of the establishment and destruction of the Moravian "Village of Peace" are given at some length, and with minute description. The efforts to Christianize the Indians are described as they never have been before, and the author has depicted the characters of the leaders of the several Indian tribes with great care, which of itself will be of interest to the student.

By no means least among the charms of the story are the vivid word-pictures of the thrilling adventures, and the intense paintings of the beauties of nature, as seen in the almost unbroken forests.

It is the spirit of the frontier which is described, and one can by it, perhaps, the better understand why men, and women, too, willingly braved every privation and danger that the westward progress of the star of empire might be the more certain and rapid. A love story, simple and tender, runs through the book.

RICHELIEU. A tale of France in the reign of King Louis XIII. By G. P. R. James. Cloth, 12mo. with four illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

In 1829 Mr. James published his first romance, "Richelieu," and was recognized at once as one of the masters of the craft.

In this book he laid the story during those later days of the great cardinal's life, when his power was beginning to wane, but while it was yet sufficiently strong to permit now and then of volcanic outbursts which overwhelmed foes and carried friends to the topmost wave of prosperity. One of the most striking portions of the story is that of Cinq Mar's conspiracy; the method of conducting criminal cases, and the political trickery resorted to by royal favorites, affording a better insight into the statecraft of that day than can be had even by an exhaustive study of history. It is a powerful romance of love and diplomacy, and in point of thrilling and absorbing interest has never been excelled.

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WINDSOR CASTLE. A Historical Romance of the Reign of Henry VIII., Catharine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. By Wm. Harrison Ainsworth. Cloth, 12mo. with four illustrations by George Cruikshank. Price, \$1.00.

"Windsor Castle" is the story of Henry VIII., Catharine, and Anne Boleyn. "Bluff King Hal," although a well-loved monarch, was none too good a one in many ways. Of all his selfishness and unwarrantable acts, none was more discreditable than his divorce from Catharine, and his marriage to the beautiful Anne Boleyn. The King's love was as brief as it was vehement. Jane Seymour, waiting maid on the Queen, attracted him, and Anne Boleyn was forced to the block to make room for her successor. This romance is one of extreme interest to all readers.

HORSESHOE ROBINSON. A tale of the Tory Ascendency in South Carolina in 1780. By John P. Kennedy. Cloth, 12mo. with four illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

Among the old favorites in the field of what is known as historical fiction, there are none which appeal to a larger number of Americans than *Horseshoe Robinson*, and this because it is the only story which depicts with fidelity to the facts the heroic efforts of the colonists in South Carolina to defend their homes against the brutal oppression of the British under such leaders as Cornwallis and Tarleton.

The reader is charmed with the story of love which forms the thread of the tale, and then impressed with the wealth of detail concerning those times. The picture of the manifold sufferings of the people, is never overdrawn, but painted faithfully and honestly by one who spared neither time nor labor in his efforts to present in this charming love story all that price in blood and tears which the Carolinians paid as their share in the winning of the republic.

Take it all in all, "*Horseshoe Robinson*" is a work which should be found on every book-shelf, not only because it is a most entertaining story, but because of the wealth of valuable information concerning the colonists which it contains. That it has been brought out once more, well illustrated, is something which will give pleasure to thousands who have long desired an opportunity to read the story again, and to the many who have tried vainly in these latter days to procure a copy that they might read it for the first time.

THE PEARL OF ORR'S ISLAND. A story of the Coast of Maine. By Harriet Beecher Stowe. Cloth, 12mo. Illustrated. Price, \$1.00.

Written prior to 1862, the "*Pearl of Orr's Island*" is ever new; a book filled with delicate fancies, such as seemingly array themselves anew each time one reads them. One sees the "sea like an unbroken mirror all around the pine-girt, lonely shores of Orr's Island," and straightway comes "the heavy, hollow moan of the surf on the beach, like the wild angry howl of some savage animal."

Who can read of the beginning of that sweet life, named Mara, which came into this world under the very shadow of the Death angel's wings, without having an intense desire to know how the premature bud blossomed? Again and again one lingers over the descriptions of the character of that baby boy Moses, who came through the tempest, amid the angry billows, pillowed on his dead mother's breast.

There is no more faithful portrayal of New England life than that which Mrs. Stowe gives in "*The Pearl of Orr's Island*."

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"The Last Trail" is a story of the border. The scene is laid at Fort Henry, where Col. Ebenezer Zane with his family have built up a village despite the attacks of savages and renegades. The Colonel's brother and Wetzal, known as Deathwind by the Indians, are the bordermen who devote their lives to the welfare of the white people. A splendid love story runs through the book.

That Helen Sheppard, the heroine, should fall in love with such a brave, skilful scout as Jonathan Zane seems only reasonable after his years of association and defense of the people of the settlement from savages and renegades.

If one has a liking for stories of the trail, where the white man matches brains against savage cunning, for tales of ambush and constant striving for the mastery, "The Last Trail" will be greatly to his liking.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE HORSESHOE. A traditional tale of the Cocked Hat Gentry in the Old Dominion. By Dr. Wm. A. Caruthers. Cloth, 12mo. Four page illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

Many will hail with delight the re-publication of this rare and justly famous story of early American colonial life and old-time Virginian hospitality.

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This story is an authentic exposition of the manners and customs during Lord Baltimore's rule. The greater portion of the action takes place in St. Mary's—the original capital of the State.

The quaint character of Rob, the loss of whose legs was supplied by a wooden bowl strapped to his thighs, his misfortunes and mother wit, far outshine those fair to look upon. Pirates and smugglers did Rob consort with for gain, and it was to him that Blanche Werden owed her life and her happiness, as the author has told us in such an enchanting manner.

As a series of pictures of early colonial life in Maryland, "Rob of the Bowl" has no equal. The story is full of splendid action, with a charming love story, and a plot that never loosens the grip of its interest to its last page.

TICONDEROGA. A Story of Early Frontier Life in the Mohawk Valley. By G. P. R. James. Cloth, 12mo. Four page illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

The setting of the story is decidedly more picturesque than any ever evolved by Cooper. The story is located on the frontier of New York State. The principal characters in the story include an English gentleman, his beautiful daughter, Lord Howe, and certain Indian sachems belonging to the Five Nations, and the story ends with the Battle of Ticonderoga.

The character of Captain Brooks, who voluntarily decides to sacrifice his own life in order to save the son of the Englishman, is not among the least of the attractions of this story, which holds the attention of the reader even to the last page.

Interwoven with the plot is the Indian "blood" law, which demands a life for a life, whether it be that of the murderer or one of his race. A more charming story of mingled love and adventure has never been written than "Ticonderoga."

MARY DERWENT. A tale of the Wyoming Valley in 1778. By Mrs. Ann S. Stephens. Cloth, 12mo. Four illustrations by J. Watson Davis. Price, \$1.00.

The scene of this fascinating story of early frontier life is laid in the Valley of Wyoming. Aside from Mary Derwent, who is of course the heroine, the story deals with Queen Esther's son, Giengwatah, the Butlers of notorious memory, and the adventures of the Colonists with the Indians.

Though much is made of the Massacre of Wyoming, a great portion of the tale describes the love making between Mary Derwent's sister, Walter Butler, and one of the defenders of Fort Fort.

This historical novel stands out bright and pleasing, because of the mystery and notoriety of several of the actors, the tender love scenes, descriptions of the different localities, and the struggles of the settlers. It holds the attention of the reader even to the last page.

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